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DAILY *manna*

JANUARY – MARCH 2010

GENERAL EDITOR

Rev Isaac Ong

Daily devotions for reading through the Bible

Dear *Daily Manna* readers,

Blessed New Year! We look back at 2009 with praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done for and through us. We echo the words of the Psalmist, who says, “Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered” [Psalm 40:5].

If you are new to *Daily Manna*, we are glad that you have joined us. If you have been reading the *Daily Manna*, we are glad that you have made it part of your life. We look forward to another year of spiritual feasting upon God’s Word. It is our prayer that our knowledge of God’s Word and our faith would be strengthened and built up “precept upon precept; line upon line” [Isaiah 28:10].

A note to new Daily Manna readers

In this book, you will find a reading plan that will guide you through reading the Bible in two years. You will also find a simple exposition based on the reading of the day. From the day’s Bible passages, *Daily Manna* highlights biblical principles which may be applied in the Christian’s daily living. We pray that the *Daily Manna* readings will make your reading through the Bible a more meaningful experience. Over the next two years, our focus will be on the Old Testament with the aim of giving you a more in depth study of the OT books.

A step-by-step approach

1. Read the day’s Bible chapters assigned in *Daily Manna*.
2. Review the Bible chapters to get an overview of what you have just read.
3. Read the accompanying devotions in *Daily Manna* and reflect on the lessons learnt.
4. Pray and ask God to help you apply His Word to your life.

In His grace,
Pastor Isaac Ong
Calvary B-P Church

1 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 1

LESSON

Staying close to God and delighting in His law

VERSE 1

*Blessed is the man that
walketh not in the counsel
of the ungodly, nor standeth
in the way of sinners, nor
sitteth in the seat of the
scornful.*

This is the psalm that begins the Psalter. In this psalm, the comparison is made between the godly and ungodly man. The godly man is compared to a tree by the waters. He is blessed. He is fruitful. He is useful. He is found in the presence of God. He has a good ending. The ungodly man is like the chaff, an empty husk without any use.

The difference between the two men is what each does with and in his life. The godly man delights in the Word of God. He meditates upon it and lives by it. That is why he is fruitful. The Word of God has a real and positive effect in his life because God knows the way of the godly man.

The ungodly man, on the other hand, delights in evil. He revels in opposing the Word and the will of God. He relishes in sin. The Bible says that there is a judgement waiting for such a man. The ungodly man “may sit in the seat of the scornful” [v. 1b] but one day he will stand in the dock of the condemned and face the judgement of the righteous Judge.

No man can keep God’s law perfectly. However, He has also sent His Son, our Lord Jesus, to die for sinners so that in Him we can be free from God’s judgement. We can praise God because our Lord Jesus has borne our sins. In Christ, we can delight in God’s law.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 23
MARK 1

THOUGHT

Thank God in Christ, we are not condemned.

2 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 2

LESSON

God is King

VERSE 11

*Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.*

What audacity of the creature to pour scorn upon his Creator? What impudence that puny kings should shake their feeble fists at the all-powerful God? But it is God Who will have the last laugh. He shall have them in derision [v. 4]. God will judge and destroy those who, in their arrogance, rebel against Him and His Anointed One.

At His first advent, our Lord Jesus came as the suffering Saviour to save sinners. One day, He will come as the righteous Judge and those who laugh at Him now will regret because on that day of judgement, they will wail when they receive their just deserts. However, God is longsuffering. He gives warning after warning of His impending judgement upon sinners. He is also gracious to provide a way for us to escape His judgement—through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the Gospel that you must bring to the lost. God has given us the Great Commission to preach the good news of salvation. We must continue to serve God by sowing the Gospel seed even though man may reject it. Our job is to sow and water. God will give the increase.

Let us thank God that He has given us the privilege, opportunity and ability to serve him. We should count it a joy and privilege to be blessed with this ability. The Psalmist exhorts us to “serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling” [v. 11].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 24
MARK 2

THOUGHT

Serve the Lord reverentially.

3 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 3–4

LESSON

The peace of God

PSALM 4:8

*I will both lay me down in
peace, and sleep: for thou,
LORD, only makest me
dwell in safety.*

This psalm expresses David's confidence and security in God. David knew that there were enemies who would "turn" his "glory into shame" [Psalm 4:2]. Nevertheless, he knew that in God, all would be well. David's enemies were not figments of his imagination. They were real and powerful. Their threats were also real. But so is God and He is infinitely more powerful. That was the reason David committed himself in the loving hands of God and lay "down in peace and sleep".

Such is David's confidence, which we also have. Often, it is when we are at our wits' end that we lose sleep. We stay awake through the night as if that is the solution to our problems. David's peaceful sleep did not mean that he did not care. Ignorance is not bliss; confidence in God is. Like David, you can lie "down in peace" when you have committed yourself to the God of peace.

We live in a troubled world. You may have problems for which you don't have any solution and no one can help you. Turn to God. He is always there to listen and help. And God is able to turn your mourning to joy.

He is able to bless you with peace of mind, so that even when you are in the midst of life-threatening circumstances, you can safely trust in Him and lie "down in peace and sleep".

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 25
MARK 3

THOUGHT

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. – 1 Peter 5:7

4 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 5

LESSON

Worshipping and serving God

VERSE 7

*But as for me, I will come
into thy house in the
multitude of thy mercy: and
in thy fear will I worship
toward thy holy temple.*

This psalm is the first and foremost of David's prayers to God, a plea for God to attend to his cry and to deliver him [v. 1–3]. It is also an expression of David's absolute confidence in God as his protector against evil [v. 4–7]. David also prayed to God for guidance, as he was besieged by danger and deception, and surrounded by enemies who were powerful and treacherous. So David prayed for God's deliverance. Finally, David exhorted all to trust in God [v. 11–12]. What is true for David is true also for you if you would put your trust in God. The Lord never disappointed David, and He will never disappoint you.

In verse 7, we see David's confidence in God. When all around him were screaming for his blood and looking for his life, David turned to God. As God's people, we should not be affected by what the wicked do. We must distinguish ourselves from evil persons, reminding ourselves that God has saved us to be different.

When the wicked pressurise, we should pray to God. When they terrorise, we should turn to God in worship. Our duty, in all circumstances, is to worship and serve God. God takes pleasure in blessing those who trust Him. Leave the judgement of the wicked to God because vengeance belongs to God.

So instead of fretting, come into the presence of God and stand in awe of God's unfailing love.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 26
MARK 4

THOUGHT

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. – Psalm 46:1

5 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 6

LESSON

Plea to lighten the chastening hand

VERSE 1

*O LORD, rebuke me not in
thine anger, neither chasten
me in thy hot displeasure.*

Psalm 6 is the first of seven “penitential” psalms, which are songs of confession and humility before God. This psalm expresses the sorrow [v. 3, 6–7], the humiliation [v. 2, 4] and the hatred of sin [v. 8]. These are the unfeeling marks of a man’s contrite spirit when he turns to God in true repentance.

David accepted God’s rebuke because he had sinned. He knew he deserved whatever punishment God saw fit to send. He only pleaded with God not to chasten him in His wrath. He made the same plea in Psalm 38:1. Similarly, prophet Jeremiah cried out: “O Lord, correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing” [Jeremiah 10:24].

May we also pray that if God does not remove or reduce His chastisement, which we deserve, they will be sweetened by our awareness that they are not meted out in His anger, but in love. “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” [Hebrews 12:7]

David appealed to God to be merciful instead of being angry. He knew that if God were to deal with him in justice alone and not mercy, he would perish in God’s wrath. How ironic, therefore, that we plead with God to show us mercy when we have sinned but in the same breath we pray for God’s justice to be meted on others. We have to remember that God in His mercy has forgiven us our sins instead of giving us what we deserve.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 27
MARK 5

THOUGHT

**When God chastens us, we do not feel good, but
it is certainly for our good.**

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 7***LESSON****Confidence in God's deliverance****VERSE 1**

*O LORD my God, in thee
do I put my trust: save
me from all them that
persecute me, and deliver
me.*

Psalm 7 was likely written when David was on the run from King Saul. He was clearly in distress but he put his case before God. He believed he had done nothing wrong to deserve such treatment from his adversaries. He prayed for deliverance from his enemies [v. 1–2], appealed to God for his innocence [v. 3–5], prayed to Him to judge his cause [v. 6–9] and expressed confidence in God [v. 10–17].

When David was under attack from his enemies, the one Person that he could trust was God. This psalm contains David's cry of anguish in his predicament and confidence in God's deliverance. Sometimes God's strength is evident in helping us through trials. Other times, His strength is evident in delivering us from our trials. In the midst of the storms and struggles of life, where do believers find peace and security? Only in God can we find lasting peace and refuge.

We notice in verse 1 that David called out: "O Lord, my God". This is the first instance in the Psalms where David addressed the Almighty by the united names of "Lord" and "God". Indeed, no more suitable words can be placed at the start of any prayer or praise by a believer. However urgent our situations may be, we must still address our Heavenly Father reverently.

WS Plumer said the names of "O Lord, my God" denote "at once a supreme reverence and the most endearing confidence". They convey recognition of God's infinite perfection.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 28
MARK 6

THOUGHT

David found great comfort in knowing that God was the Judge of all the earth.

7 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 8–9

LESSON

God ordaining strength on the weak

PSALM 8:2

*Out of the mouth of babes
and sucklings hast thou
ordained strength because
of thine enemies, that thou
mightest still the enemy and
the avenger.*

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength [Matthew 21:16]. Our Lord had performed many miracles for which He received the praises of children. The Jewish religious leaders were upset at the profusion of praise that Jesus received. Our Lord quoted Psalm 8:2 to vindicate the hosannas of the children against the objections of the scribes and Pharisees.

David touched on a familiar theme in the Bible: the idea that God uses weak things to display His glory and strength. “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” [1 Corinthians 1:27]. It is hard to think of anything more helpless than a baby, yet God can ordain strength out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. Likewise, God can use the weak believer for His glory. He can also give strength in our moments of weakness so that we can emerge as victors in His Name.

God displays His strength in frail and helpless people “because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger” [Psalm 8:1]. One example is Job. God silenced the accusations of Satan against Job by sustaining him in his untold physical pain and mental suffering. Job emerged with a victorious testimony of God’s love.

Likewise, our adversaries have nothing to say when, by the grace of God, we stand and allow Him to work in and through us.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 29
MARK 7

THOUGHT

Don’t lose heart. God often uses people who are feeble and powerless as instruments of His strength.

8 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 10

LESSON

The ungodly does not think of God.

VERSE 4

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

Martin Luther said, “There is not a psalm which describes the mind, the manners, the works, the words, the feelings, and the fate of the ungodly with so much propriety, fullness and light, as this psalm ... We may here find a perfect image and representation of iniquity.”

The ungodly is proud. His heart is deceitful. He does not seek God and “God is not in all his thoughts”. He thinks much but he thinks nothing of and about God. The only place where God is not found is in the thoughts of the wicked. The Psalmist says that “the pride of [the wicked’s] countenance” is the reason they have no regard for God. Their ignoring God is an expression of their perceived independence of and imagined equality with or superiority over Him. Nothing is more repulsive to a proud heart than the knowledge of a God Who is infinitely powerful, just and holy.

Spurgeon said, “Proud hearts breed proud looks and stiff knees. A brazen face and a broken heart never go together. Honesty shines in the face, but villainy peeps out at the eyes. It is hard to pray with a stiff neck and an unbending knee.” The effect of pride is that it keeps men from seeking God.

Believers may not behave like the wicked who openly deny and defy God but there are times when we allow pride to prevent us from submitting to God and doing His will. So examine your heart and make sure that pride does not rule there.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 30
MARK 8

THOUGHT

If God be not in our thoughts, our thoughts will bring us to perdition. – Spurgeon

BIBLE LESSON*Psalms 11–12***LESSON****Flattering lips and double heart****PSALM 12:2**

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

David saw around him people who spoke “vanity every one with his neighbour”. They indulged in idle chatter (flattering lips) and they were two-faced liars (double heart). David was a warrior in the battlefield. However, in the battles of gossip and backbiting, he felt helpless against the deceptive chatters. He appealed to the Lord to “cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things” [Psalm 12:3].

Flattering lips say what people want to hear. Many people speak with little or no honesty. They speak words that are “politically correct” or “socially acceptable” instead of words that are true and honest.

“With a double heart do they speak.” Many believers have one heart for the church and another for the world—one for Sundays and another for weekdays. Thomas Adams said: “A man without a heart is a wonder, but a man with two hearts is a monster. It is said of Judas, there were many hearts in one man.” When we read of the saints, there was one heart in many men [Acts 4:32].

As God’s people, we have to learn to speak with honesty and sincerity. What we say reveals who we are. Our talk reveals our heart “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” [Matthew 12:34]. Falsehood uttered reveals falsehood within. Idle talk points to an idle heart. “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain” [James 1:26].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 31
MARK 9

THOUGHT

A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin. – Proverbs 26:28

10 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 13–14

LESSON

Don't be a fool.

PSALM 14:1

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

Anything that God says demands our attention. Not many things in the Bible are repeated word for word. When that happens, God is demanding our focused attention on the message. Psalm 14, which addresses the atheist, is such a case. It is almost exactly repeated in Psalm 53 and its key point is repeated in Romans 3:10–12.

The atheist is portrayed as a fool because he knows there is a God but he chooses to deny it and acts as if God does not exist. In Romans 1:20, Paul notes that God has revealed Himself in nature and this is sufficient to prove His existence. Such revelation of God's power and existence is shown to all people, regardless of their background. There is no excuse for failing to acknowledge and worship Him.

Man, in his sinfulness, suppresses the truth about God. He makes every effort to reject God. In fact, the entire human race is corrupt—and that includes us. The atheist mentioned in Psalm 14:1 is only one example of mankind [Romans 3:10–12]. If not for God's saving intervention in our lives, we, too, would naturally reject God. Without the Holy Spirit giving us spiritual understanding, we, too, would tend towards foolishness.

Thank God that, in Christ, we have been made righteous. As we seek to please God in our lives, we can be comforted to know that He is present in the company of the righteous [Psalm 14:5]. He is our refuge [Psalm 14:6].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 32
MARK 10

THOUGHT

Nature is an outstretched finger pointing towards God. – Psalm 104:24

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 15–16

LESSON

After God's own heart

PSALM 15:1

*LORD, who shall abide in
thy tabernacle? Who shall
dwell in thy holy hill?*

The Christian's character does matter a great deal. It reflects Christ to the world [Matthew 5:16]. But what exactly is the character that pleases God? How should we live so that we can enjoy God's blessings? David asked these questions in Psalm 15 and answered them with a list of character traits. This list is not all-inclusive. Other passages, such as Psalm 24:3–4 and Isaiah 33:14–17, also mention comparable character traits with varying details that a godly person should have.

Psalm 15 lists the characteristics of the person who is after God's own heart. First, his character is morally sound and wholesome. He strives to obey God's Word all the time. Second, he is trustworthy because he speaks the truth—what is actual and factual. He does not gossip or harm others with his speech. Third, he treats people with respect. When we behave arrogantly or snub others, especially those who are less important, God is displeased. Such behaviour hinders our relationship with God.

Fourth, the godly person chooses the right values to follow. Who are the role models in our lives? Do we try to imitate people whose values and lifestyle go against God's Word? Fifth, the godly person pleases God by his integrity. He keeps his promise even when the conditions are no longer in his favour. Finally, he does not profit by taking advantage of others or by accepting bribes.

These are the character traits that God desires. Does He see them in you? Pray and ask God to help you develop them.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 33
MARK 11

THOUGHT

God has saved us so that we might be a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him. – Romans 12

12 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 17

LESSON

Beware the slippery path

VERSE 5

Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Psalm 17 is a psalm of lamentation and prayer. Faced with danger, David cried to God for protection and deliverance. He declared his innocence and pleaded with God to hear his prayer. David might not be perfect but he was sincere towards God. He wanted God to know that as he came before Him.

The journey of a Christian is not an easy one. We need God's grace to walk the difficult road, which is fraught with danger. The devil is always ready to bring anyone down the slippery slope. With today's society becoming increasingly godless, what used to be considered unacceptable lifestyles, values and behaviours are now justified and condoned. Many hearts have turned cold towards God's Word.

In Matthew 7:24–27, the Bible warns about the dangers of building our foundations on sand (the world) instead of upon the rock (Christ). If foolish man builds his life according to the world's blueprint, then his end will be miserable. Satan cleverly disguises the broad and slippery way with attractive options to lure people to it. It is a trap that many will fall into if they do not heed God's Word. These temporary pleasures are unable to give the peace, satisfaction and joy that only Christ can give.

Only God's protection and grace can keep us from slipping on our pathway. It is not too late to make right with God if you have strayed from Him. Pour out your heart earnestly to Him today.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 34
MARK 12

THOUGHT

Attachment to Christ is the only secret of detachment from the world.

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 18***LESSON****An oasis in the desert****VERSE 2**

*The LORD is my rock,
and my fortress, and my
deliverer; my God, my
strength, in whom I will
trust; my buckler, and the
horn of my salvation, and
my high tower.*

Flowing naturally from David's lament in Psalm 17, Psalm 18 is a song of thanksgiving in which he recalled the many occasions where God intervened and rescued him from trouble. Psalm 18 is also a kingship psalm, which directs our thoughts to our Heavenly King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Sharing the same historical setting as 2 Samuel 22, this psalm is a summary of David's gratitude to God for delivering him from Saul, as well as during his years of fighting against Israel's enemies—Philistines, Moabites, Arameans of Damascus and Edomites.

Like David, we ought to proclaim our love for God with gratitude. He is worthy of praise and glory. He is our deliverer and we can depend on Him in the face of adversity. There are many examples in the Bible that tell of God's remarkable interventions to save His people. The parting of the Red Sea to save the Israelites from the advancing Egyptians is one such testimony.

The image of a rock brings two things to mind—protection and shade. Imagine being in a hot desert under the merciless sun. Place a rock there and a small oasis will develop around it. Delicate life grows under the rock's protection. Likewise, anyone travelling through the desert can find shade during the hottest hours, enabling him to survive. David took refuge in God, who was His rock.

Let us take refuge in God's protection by trusting in Him. If God be for us, who can be against us?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 35
MARK 13

THOUGHT

If God sends us on stony paths, He will provide us with strong shoes. – Alexander Maclaren

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 19***LESSON****The powerful Word of
God****VERSE 7**

*The law of the LORD is
perfect, converting the soul:
the testimony of the LORD
is sure, making wise the
simple.*

Many hymn titles have been based on Psalm 19, declaring the glory of God as displayed in His handiwork. “The Spacious Firmament On High” and “The Heavens Declare Thy Glory” are some such examples. Christian author CS Lewis described this psalm as “one of the greatest lyrics in the world”. Rich in theology, Psalm 19 reveals that there are two types of revelation: general revelation, which refers to the revelation of God in nature; and special revelation, which is the revelation of God in the Scripture and in His Son.

God’s Word is so complete that it covers every aspect of life. It has the power to turn us from our sins, comfort and guide us through our challenges, and nourish our souls so that we may enjoy spiritual blessings. God’s Word is also trustworthy because it transforms lives. In it, we find salvation, contentment, joy and eternal life. Those who humbly follow God’s instructions will become wise but those who are too proud to heed God’s wisdom will end up being fools.

To some unbelievers, being subject to God’s law is not considered freedom. During the hippie movement, people embraced the liberty to do as they pleased. What was the result of that “freedom”? Were they happier? One consequence of the hippie subculture was the emergence of a generation of godless people plagued with many sorrows from their unrestrained lifestyles.

Man may try all means to outsmart and outrun the law but destruction awaits those who disobey it.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 36
MARK 14

THOUGHT

**When we open our hearts to Christ, God opens
our minds to His Word.**

15 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON *Psalms 20–21*

LESSON **Save me, Lord!**

PSALM 20:9
*Save, LORD: let the king
hear us when we call.*

Psalm 20 is a prelude to war; Psalm 21 is a postscript to war. Psalm 20 tells us how a nation should prepare for war. Before war, it was customary in Judah and Israel for the people to pray to the Lord, and seek an answer from Him.

Psalm 20 seems to come from the same situation. It was intended to be sung before the battle. The first part of the psalm was to be sung by all the people after the king had offered sacrifices. They wanted the king to know the kind of leader they expected of him in such times and look forward to rejoicing in his victory [v. 5].

Then the king responded that he needed help from the Lord [v. 6–9]. The king expressed his confidence in God. The king expressed that the war had already been won. The people and the king expressed their need for God. Victory was expected because Israel trusted in God. Finally, the whole congregation joined in singing: “Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call” [Psalm 20:9]. They wanted God to show His power in delivering the king in battle.

How comforting to know that God is in control of everything. Not only can He deliver us from trials but, more importantly, God is able to save to the uttermost. As His children, let us learn to turn to Him in good times as well as in bad. If you have not received God’s saving faith yet, do so right now.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 37
MARK 15

THOUGHT

We must depend totally on the Lord for deliverance from trials.

16 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 22

LESSON

God hears.

VERSE 24

*For he hath not despised
nor abhorred the affliction
of the afflicted; neither hath
he hid his face from him;
but when he cried unto
him, he heard.*

Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm. It is a prayer that can bring us from great sufferings to great joy. It is quoted 13 times in the New Testament, of which nine refer to the account of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to the title, this psalm is a cry from David to the Lord, appealing for help over a considerable period of time. He believed that God would lead him out of his suffering. David was obviously enduring some great trials but through his suffering, he gained victory.

He mentioned various incidents of his tribulations. Persecution by Saul had been fierce. David had to run from place to place to hide from his enemies. Feeling desperate, David asked why God had abandoned him [v. 1]. God's silence troubled him. The word "far" [v. 1] repeated in verses 11 and 19 helps us to see that throughout this psalm. David felt that God had left him at a time when he needed God most.

In his trial and suffering, David felt like a worm. He was despised and rejected by the people. He described his enemies as bulls, lions and dogs. They surrounded him and wanted to kill him. He kept appealing for God to come quickly. But David was never alone. The Lord came to help. God had remembered David's affliction, and answered his call for help.

God will also remember you in your times of trouble.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 38
MARK 16

THOUGHT

When God delivers us, we must be prepared to offer our praise to Him.

17 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 23

LESSON

The Good Shepherd

VERSE 1

**The LORD is my
shepherd; I shall not
want.**

This is the best-known psalm and universally loved by many people. It gives us a beautiful picture of the divine Shepherd and His sheep. It speaks of God's loving concern for His sheep, and the richness of provision He makes for them. It helps us to identify and proclaim our relationship with the Lord.

The Shepherd in this psalm refers to Jesus Christ. Jesus spoke of Himself as the good Shepherd [John 10:14]. The writer of Hebrews spoke of Him "as the great Shepherd, guiding His sheep" [Hebrews 13:20–21]. Peter saw Him as the chief Shepherd, rewarding His sheep [1 Peter 5:4].

If Jesus is your Shepherd, He will do three things for you because you are His sheep. He will provide, direct and protect His children. Verses 2–3 tell us that the shepherd looks for the best pasture for his sheep. Sheep stray easily, and oftentimes they lose their sense of direction. The shepherd watches over them and keeps track of them. If one is missing, he will leave the others in a safe place and go in search for the lost sheep. The shepherd leads and the sheep follow. Verse 4 tells us that our good Shepherd leads and protects us through the valley of the shadow of death. He is with us in difficult and hopeless situations.

It is great to know that Jesus is the good Shepherd. More importantly, He is our own Shepherd if we are His sheep.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 39
LUKE 1

QUESTION **Is Jesus your Shepherd?**

18 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 24

LESSON

Who shall stand in His holy place?

VERSE 4

*He that hath clean hands,
and a pure heart; who
hath not lifted up his soul
unto vanity, nor sworn
deceitfully.*

This psalm may have been written to celebrate the moving of the Ark of the Covenant from Obed-Edom's house to Jerusalem [2 Samuel 6:10–12]. From Jewish tradition, we know that this psalm was sung every Sabbath morning in temple services. The opening words of this psalm declare that everything belongs to God. He is the Lord of creation. He is not only the God of Israel, but also the Lord God of the whole world.

Since “the earth is the Lord’s”, we are His stewards or caretakers. We should be committed to proper management of everything we receive from Him and use it for His glory.

The Psalmist specifies four traits of character for those who want to worship God. “He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully” [v. 4]. “Clean hands” indicate that his action is righteous and blameless. “Pure heart” reveals his sincere motive. “Vanity” means “emptiness and the shallowness of this world” [Ecclesiastes 1:2]. He seeks and sets his affection on things above [Colossians 3:1–2]. “He hath not sworn deceitfully” means that he is trustworthy and dependable.

Those who are pure in thought, deed and word are able to worship God. They shall receive blessings from the Lord. Only God can make it possible for sinful man to receive such a blessing. He is the God of salvation. We are to seek Him and to receive His blessings—such blessing is the gift from God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 40
LUKE 2

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, keep me pure in Your holy presence.

19 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 25

LESSON

Humility

VERSE 9

The meek will he guide in judgement: and the meek will he teach his way.

Psalm 25 is a prayer of David for forgiveness of sin, guidance and help in his affliction. The first prayer is for protection [v. 1–3], “Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul” [v. 1a]. He did not simply lift up his eyes or hands in prayer, but he also lifted up his soul and spirit to the Lord in prayer. He appealed to the Lord (Jehovah)—the One Who keeps His promises—and to God (Elohim, the God of creation). He declared his trust and confidence in the Lord.

The next section of his prayer is for guidance. He wanted to know the ways of the Lord, to walk in His paths and to grow in His truth. Therefore, he asked God to show, to teach and to lead him in His truth [v. 4–5].

Later, David asked for forgiveness by appealing to God to forget his past sins, and remember His mercies and loving-kindness [v. 6–7]. He acknowledges that “Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way” [v. 8]. Because the Lord is good, He will not forsake sinners, but will receive and show them the way of righteousness so that they can live righteously.

The important lesson to learn is humility [v. 9]. We must be meek enough to admit our ignorance and our need for further instruction. If we are teachable, we will learn the way of the Lord, walk in His path and grow in His truth.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 41
LUKE 3

THOUGHT

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. – Matthew 5:5

20 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 26

LESSON

God upholds.

VERSE 8

*LORD, I have loved the
habitation of thy house,
and the place where thine
honour dwelleth.*

In this psalm, we see the trust and confidence David had in God. He trusted the Lord and had full confidence in God. He knew that God had now put him on the even ground and that he would not slide. He was always conscious of the loving-kindness of the Lord, as he said, "For thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes"[v. 3].

David differentiated himself from the world and lived a life based on God's truth. He loved the truth and faithfully followed it. He also treated others in truth. He walked in His integrity, uprightness and honesty. He kept away from vain persons and evildoers. He knew that these persons would get him involved in mischief, wickedness, briberies and covetousness. They would do him no good. To walk in God's truth is to keep ourselves from sin and mischief.

Even though he walked in His integrity, David knew that he was not sinless. He asked God to examine his heart. He went to his Lord in humility and asked God to forgive him that he might be clean and have a pure heart.

David loved going before his God and spending time with Him. David loved going to the Lord's house and sing praises to God. The reason is that in God's house, David experienced the glory of the mighty God. David made God the centre of his life. When we put God as the centre of our life, He will also uphold us.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 42
LUKE 4

PRAYER

**Lord, help me to delight in spending time with
Thee, in reading the Bible and in prayer.**

21 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 27

LESSON

God the protector

VERSE 4

*One thing have I desired
of the LORD, that will I
seek after; that I may dwell
in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life, to
behold the beauty of the
LORD, and to inquire in his
temple.*

When we encounter trouble, persecution and attacks from our enemies, Who can we turn to? David turned to the Lord. Every day Satan is at war with us. Satan tempts us with materialism and a myriad of sinful lusts. He lulls us into a life of ease and imprints our minds with worldly values. He discourages us through sickness, slander, poverty, disappointments, hopelessness and persecution [v. 2–3, 12]. Satan builds walls around us to stop us from getting close to God, keeping us spiritually cold and weak.

David desired to be in the Lord's house. Then, he could behold and gaze upon the beauty, sweetness, goodness and loveliness of his Lord. In God's house, David could see God as his refuge, light, salvation and strength. David knew that he was safe, as God had placed him on a solid rock.

David knew that God would hear and answer his prayers, would not forsake him, would teach him and guide him. In God's house, David could experience anew the presence of the Lord—a presence so vital to his life. However, it must be pointed out that David did not go to the Lord's house only when he was in trouble. He desires to be there every day of his life.

As God's people, we must have David's heart and mindset. Come to God's house with expectation. Enter into His presence with praises and thanksgiving. Come into the presence of God, and you will find in Him strength, courage, promise and hope.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 43
LUKE 5

PRAYER

Lord, help me to delight in Thy beauty.

22 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 28–29

LESSON

**Worship the Lord in the
beauty of holiness.**

PSALM 29:2

*Give unto the LORD the
glory due unto his name;
worship the LORD in the
beauty of holiness.*

How shall we come to worship our Lord? David said that we must come with holiness to worship the Lord [Psalm 29:2]. From these two psalms, we learn that to worship is to give glory to the Lord. God is full of power and majesty; He spoke and everything was created. Nature obeys His command. God sits on His throne with absolute control. He is the King from eternity to eternity.

To worship God is also to rejoice and sing praises to our Lord. God is not only great but He also does great things in our lives—He saves, helps, hears and answers our prayers. He is our rock, strength, shield and trust [Psalm 28:1, 2, 6–8]. And we worship Him for who He is and what He has done.

The Apostle John gives us a glimpse of the Almighty God: “And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen” [Revelation 7:11–12].

Our Lord is holy and we must come to Him with clean hands, a pure heart and a reverential spirit. The true worshipper is also one who lives a righteous life separated from the world [Psalm 28:3]. The true worshipper is also submissive to God, Who is sovereign and whose righteousness shall prevail.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 44
LUKE 6

PRAYER

**Lord, cleanse me so that I may come before Thee
with clean hands and a pure heart.**

23 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 30

LESSON

Pride in prosperity

VERSE 7

*LORD, by thy favour thou
hast made my mountain
to stand strong: thou didst
hide thy face, and I was
troubled.*

Pride usually comes from a sense of self-achievement. People celebrate as a result of their success and think they deserve the good life. David had the same attitude and mindset too. He said, “And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved” [v. 6].

Pride and success rendered David not only blind to his own weaknesses but also to the presence of God in his life. It was only when God hid His face from him that David realised his folly and understood that it was by the favour of the Lord that he was able to stand [v. 7].

Likewise, we are what we are because of the grace of God. God’s hand of blessings upon David’s life was not realised until he was in trouble, when he became the scorn of his enemies. At that time of despair, David looked to God again in faith, and he was confident that God would not let him die before the appointed time for his death, as it would not profit God. He looked to the mercy of God and knew that God would turn his mourning into dancing and bless him with gladness [v. 9–11].

The mercy of the Lord is wonderful and great. David declared, “For His anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” [v. 5]. What an exchange: glory in personal success for the favour of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 45
LUKE 7

PRAYER

Lord, forgive my pride and always remind me to give glory due to You.

24 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 31

LESSON

Help to a troubled soul

VERSE 19

*Oh how great is thy
goodness, which thou hast
laid up for them that fear
thee; which thou hast
wrought for them that trust
in thee before the sons of
men!*

We live in this cruel, cold and competitive world. Perhaps for some of us, our life experiences mirror that which is described in verses 9–13. We are hard pressed and stressed just to make a decent living to meet our daily needs. We struggle and toil just as hard as anyone.

Yet there are times we are despised when we fail to meet up to the expectations of man. We get disappointed, disheartened and discouraged, and our spirit weakens, with no more strength to carry on. Friends stay away from us. They make themselves scarce, especially if we are in trouble. The loneliness and helplessness become unbearable.

David never allowed his circumstances to blind him. He looked beyond the dark clouds. “But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God” [v. 14]. There is a shining light coming from God. David knew that God had seen his distresses. He knew that God was aware of his grief. He knew God was in full control of his life, and he put his trust in God. God would neither disappoint him nor put him in shame before men.

Like David, with God as our solid Rock, we can face life’s trials with courage, and echo with David, “O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee ...” [v. 19].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 46
LUKE 8

THOUGHT

Lord, we know life is challenging, but we know that Thy grace is sufficient for our needs.

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 32***LESSON****Joy of sin forgiven****VERSE 1**

*Blessed is he whose
transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.*

Psalm 32 is the second of the penitential psalms. It is also a psalm of instruction. Heartfelt relief and joy is the only appropriate response of a pardoned sinner [v. 1–2]. It was David’s testimony of the misery of unconfessed sin and God’s immediate forgiveness [v. 3–7]. The natural outcome is to rejoice and praise God for His forgiveness and guidance [v. 8–11].

Notice the opening word of this psalm. This is the second time in the Psalter that a psalm begins with the word “blessed” (the other is Psalm 1, an exhortation to the righteous on holy living). However, here in Psalm 32, the joy of sin forgiven is felt even much more because of the blessed restoration of fellowship with Christ.

Speaking from personal experience, David knew the untold misery of transgression. He must have recollected his sins of adultery with Bathsheba and of the murder of her husband, Uriah. Only a person who had experienced so much forgiveness could appreciate the joy of restoration. Whenever we sin, we must realise that it is first and foremost against God [Psalm 51:4].

How about you? Have you been forgiven by someone whom you have hurt? More importantly, have you experienced and accepted God’s forgiveness? If not, don’t delay. Take the time to acknowledge your sin before God and invite Jesus to be your Saviour now. Then you will appreciate the joy of sin forgiven in Christ Jesus.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 47
LUKE 9

THOUGHT

The height of forgiving love is shown on the Cross of Calvary.

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 33***LESSON****Rejoicing in the Lord****VERSE 1**

*Rejoice in the LORD, O
ye righteous: for praise is
comely for the upright.*

This psalm of praise is the natural response of a pardoned sinner. Verses 1–11 give the reasons for praising God. His creative power is worthy of our praise. This is related to His providential care for His creatures [v. 12–22]. His children are very much encouraged by His Almighty power as our help and shield.

Verse 1, in accordance with the last verse of the preceding psalm, focuses on praising God for the upright. Whether in joyful or adverse circumstances, all believers must learn to rejoice in our Lord Jesus. More often than not, most of us tend to be thankful only when things go right for us. But it is all the more important to remember that God is also in control during trials and tribulations [Romans 8:28].

God's Word and His works in creation, as well as His providence, is the subject matter of Psalm 33, as the cause of our rejoicing in Him. This doctrine of God's providence refutes the error of deism. Deists believe that God created the world and then left it to run on its own. They claim that God has no control over the affairs of man.

Another error refuted by the doctrine of providence is the pagan teaching of fatalism. Mechanical fate does not offer hope for anyone. As a believer, your cause of rejoicing is the Lord Jesus. God's sovereign providence reveals His loving goodness and mercy to His children. If you are not a believer, come to Jesus now and receive His hope of eternal life.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 48
LUKE 10

HYMN**O rejoice in the Lord, He makes no mistake.**

27 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 34

LESSON

Divine deliverance

VERSE 19

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

In the first 10 verses, David praised God in gratitude for delivering him from danger. He urged others to do the same. In the next 12 verses, David exhorted all the righteous to be God-fearing. This must be shown in our daily lives, both in speech and conduct.

The background to Psalm 34 is recorded in 1 Samuel 21:10–15. David was on the run from King Saul. He sought asylum from Abimelech of the Philistines. Just like Pharaoh was the title given to the Egyptian kings and Caesar to the Roman emperors, Abimelech was a common name of the Philistine kings. David pretended to be a madman in order to escape from the king.

Divine deliverance is mentioned four times in this psalm [v. 4, 7, 17, 19]. As God's children, we are protected from fear, enemies, trouble and affliction. Do not be mistaken that a believer leads a trouble-free life. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" [John 16:33b]. Read verse 19 again and take note of the word "many". Thank God for delivering the righteous out of all their afflictions.

Throughout Scripture, we read of God's faithful servants experiencing trials in their lives. The Christian life is usually not smooth and plain sailing. Life is not a bed of roses. However, with God on our side, we are always on the victorious side. God's promise of divine deliverance includes eternal redemption. Thank God that all believers have eternal life in Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 49
LUKE 11

THOUGHT

The greatest deliverance is from the curse of sin.

BIBLE LESSON*Psalms 35***LESSON****God, our champion****VERSE 1**

*Plead my cause, O LORD,
with them that strive with
me: fight against them that
fight against me.*

Here we read of David pleading for God's protection from his enemies' ruthless attack [v. 1–10]. He accused his enemies of perjury and ingratitude. They were slandering him [v. 11–16]. God's help is again sought by David to champion his grievance [v. 17–28].

Psalm 35 is an imprecatory psalm in which David prayed for God's judgement upon his enemies. Other imprecatory psalms are Psalms 7, 69 and 109. The most vehement in the Psalter is Psalm 109, containing at least 30 anathemas! Imprecatory prayers are offered not for personal revenge but for the vindication of God's name. All believers should pray for God's truth and righteousness to prevail over Satan and his evil devices.

It is comforting to know that God is our champion and advocate. Just like David, when we have been wronged and maligned, do not be disheartened. Believe in the truth of Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Read the key verse again.

When we try to right a wrong, we must not take the law into our own hands. If you are a believer, leave the issue prayerfully in God's hands. Vengeance rightfully belongs to Him alone [Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19–21]. On the contrary, in God's strength, be gracious and forgiving. Overcome evil with good by feeding your enemy and offering him a drink when necessary. As a non-believer, would you be willing to accept Christ as your personal Saviour to save you from your sin?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 50
LUKE 12

THOUGHT**God our Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous**

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 36***LESSON****Everlasting faithfulness****VERSE 5**

*Thy mercy, O LORD, is
in the heavens; and thy
faithfulness reacheth unto
the clouds.*

Psalm 36 resembles Psalm 1 in contrasting the way of the wicked and the state of the righteous. Verses 1–4 of Psalm 36 describe the downfall of the ungodly while verses 5–9 describe the blessed state of the godly. This psalm concludes with different destinations for the two groups. Believers continue to enjoy continued spiritual blessings. However, God’s just and appropriate judgement is reserved for unbelievers.

David described the wicked person as having no fear of God. The opening verse parallels that of Psalm 14:1, where the atheist is described as a fool. Being self-centred, the unbelieving person flatters himself and stops doing good. He keeps on doing evil continually. He lives only for himself and his own self-glory.

On the other hand, the righteous person continues to experience many spiritual blessings from God. There is joy and contentment in God alone. Jesus Christ is the Source of both physical and spiritual life as well as the Light of the world. Because of God’s loving mercy, His children can experience such blessings.

Thank God for His infinite and everlasting faithfulness, which knows no limit. Our Lord Jesus is longsuffering towards sinners. If you are still not saved, don’t delay. Come to Jesus now and taste the goodness of the Lord. Those who are believers must bear good testimonies for our Lord Jesus and shine for Him wherever we go.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 51
LUKE 13

REMINDER**Read 2 Timothy 2:13.**

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 37***LESSON****Don't fret, be happy.****VERSE 3**

Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

We live in perilous times. Every day, we read in the news about people who try to get rich through dishonest means. In the process, they cause misery to others and “pierced themselves through with many sorrows” [1 Timothy 6:10]. One example is the famous financier and former chairman of the NASDAQ stock exchange in the United States. He was recently convicted of masterminding the biggest investment fraud in Wall Street history and was sentenced to 150 years in prison for cheating his clients of billions of dollars.

But we thank God that He has provided us with His Word, which is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Even though life on this earth, as Job puts it, is of few days and full of trouble, Christians are assured that when we follow the instructions in God’s “life manual”, we will not only avoid life’s many pitfalls but will also actually lead happy and contented lives.

A good place to start is Psalm 37. It begins with a series of exhortations directed to the righteous, to trust in the Lord and not fret or be angry when the wicked prosper [v. 1–8]. The ways of the righteous and the wicked are contrasted in verses 9–26. It ends with a counsel for one to do good and depart from evil, to wait on the Lord and keep His way.

Take the long view, for the righteous will be exalted and protected, while the wicked will be brought down [v. 27–40].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 52
LUKE 14

THOUGHT

But godliness with contentment is great gain. – 1 Timothy 6:6

31 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 38

LESSON

The misery of sin

VERSE 15

*For in thee, O LORD, do
I hope: thou wilt hear, O
Lord my God.*

Psalm 38 is a penitential psalm where the writer, presumably David, confesses his sins. He poured out his heart to God and repeatedly pleaded for relief and pardon. David began by pleading with God not to rebuke him in anger and wrath, and ended by begging God not to abandon him and confessing God as the Lord of his salvation.

David's vivid description of his mental and physical anguish ought to serve as a clear warning to all believers to flee from sin. He compared his suffering to being pierced by arrows. God's hand was pressing down on him. All of his bones hurt. His iniquities had gone over his head, as if he was drowning in a sea of sin. "My wounds stink and are corrupt," he said. "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long" [v. 5–6]. He also described the isolation and loneliness that he felt.

When we sin, we reap the same consequences. God chastens His own, for He wants us to walk in holiness. If you do succumb to sin, the first thing that you must do is to confess it before God. If you observe the prayers of other servants of God like Daniel, Nehemiah and Ezra, you will notice that they always come before God in humble contrition, confessing the sins of the people.

We must be ready to confess and look only to God, "for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" [Psalm 103:14].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 53
LUKE 15

PRAYER

Forgive us our trespasses and lead us not into temptation.

1 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 39

LESSON

Suffering wisely

VERSE 7

*And now, LORD, what wait
I for? My hope is in thee.*

When trouble comes into our lives we often blurt out foolish words. In this age of high-speed e-mail, this can have disastrous consequences. We should learn from the example of King David who authored this psalm. We don't know the exact details but it is apparent that he was undergoing a time of deep suffering.

In times of suffering, be silent before men. Be wise and discreet in sharing your pain with others, especially those who don't know God and may use what you say against Him. During this silence, meditate humbly before God. In David's case, he realised that life was brief and human existence without God was meaningless and empty. Earthly and temporal things are not important at all from the standpoint of eternity. The only real meaning of a man's existence must be in his relationship to God, for God is eternal.

Have hope in God. David turned to God in prayer. He unburdened himself to God and asked for deliverance from his sin. He voiced his pain to God, and trusted that God would hear him and give attention to him in his sorrow. He confessed before God that he was but a mere "stranger" and "sojourner" on earth—even though he was a king who lived in great splendour. Finally, he pleaded for compassion and appealed to God that His disciplining hand might be removed.

That is the kind of prayer of faith that God will listen.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 54
LUKE 16

THOUGHT

**Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.**

2 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 40

LESSON

Magnifying the Lord

VERSE 16

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

King David was a man who was stuck in a slimy pit, and bogged down in mud and mire. He was rescued by God, Who set his feet on a rock and gave him a firm place to stand. Now he wanted to praise and magnify God through this psalm. It has three sections: an opening joyful testimony of God's past deliverance [v. 1–3], a present reflection of God's goodness [v. 4–10] and a prayer for God's deliverance in the future [v. 11–17].

Have you ever been stuck in a pit like David? It could be a pit of sin, where one sin leads to another and you simply cannot get out of it. Or it could be a pit of personal defeat at work, at home or in a relationship. Or it could be a pit of circumstances, like Joseph when he was cast into the dungeons of Egypt. No matter what kind of pit you are in, God is able to rescue you if you are willing to trust Him and wait patiently on Him.

Through the ages, countless Christians, including kings, paupers, murderers, rapists, drug addicts, slave traders and even Christian persecutors, have experienced God's deliverance and loving-kindness.

In this sin-cursed world, you will encounter tribulations. But you need not face them on your own. If you have Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, you have a blessed hope. God will not withhold His tender mercies from you. He will make haste to deliver you.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 55
LUKE 17

THOUGHT

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. – Matthew 11:28

3 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 41

LESSON

A sinner's prayer

VERSE 4

*I said, LORD, be merciful
unto me: heal my soul; for I
have sinned against thee.*

The theme of this psalm is mercy. Our Lord taught us that “blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” [Matthew 5:7]. Here David said much the same in the opening verses, pronouncing blessing upon those who have regard for the weak. Although David had been kind to the poor at all times, when he was in trouble, he did not bargain for help. Instead, he confessed his sin and pleaded for God to have mercy on him, stating his sad condition and asking for mercy [v. 4–10].

Remember the parables that the Lord taught about the Pharisee and the publican [Luke 18:10–14], and the prodigal son [Luke 15:11–32]. David assumed the posture of the publican and the repentant son. “I have sinned against thee” is a confession without any qualification. He did not say, “Lord, I have sinned to a certain extent, but still, I have partly balanced my sins by my virtues and I hope to wipe out my faults with my tears.” He said like it is: “I have sinned against thee,” as if that was a full description of his whole life. Hear him again in Psalm 51:4a: “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.”

In the closing verses, David expressed his confidence that God would show mercy [v. 11–13]. No doubt, like the publican in Jesus’ parable, “this man went down to his house justified”.

How about us? Dare we say that we are better than David?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 56
LUKE 18

THOUGHT

O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.

4 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 42–43

LESSON

The song in the darkest night

PSALM 42:8

Yet the LORD will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

Psalms 42 and 43 are often read as a unit because a common theme runs through them. The theme is the despair of a soul that is estranged from God. The Psalmist asks, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?” [Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:2, 5], indicating an overwhelming sense of sorrow and despondency.

This anguish is exacerbated by the Psalmist’s desire to commune with God. Like the deer that yearns for the refreshing stream, so his soul pants for God. Yet it seems that his seeking had been futile. The best that he could do was to recollect the happy days of communion with God [Psalm 42:4]. There are some who remember the “good old days” and slump into depression, but not the Psalmist. He remembered the goodness of God, and he reminded himself: “Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance” [Psalm 42:5b].

There will always be trouble on earth. The Psalmist describes trouble as the roaring waters of the waterfalls and the breaking waves of the turbulent seas. However, as long as we have hope in God, we know that “the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with” us [Psalm 42:8].

This is the song of Paul and Silas when they were in prison. This is the song of the Christian in the midst of adversity. This is the song that answers the question, “Does Jesus care?”

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 57
LUKE 19

THOUGHT

**O yes, He cares – I know He cares!
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Saviour cares.**

5 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 42 and 43

LESSON

The perfect heart

VERSE 21

Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

The theme of Psalms 42 and 43 is also prevalent in Psalm 44. The title of this psalm is not only also similar to Psalm 42 but its theme is also similar. The exact historical background to this psalm is not known but it is clear that the people of God were under attack.

The psalm begins with a note of praise for and confidence in God. The people rejoiced over what they had learnt from their fathers about God's goodness. These were times of national blessings and victories [v. 3–8]. In the second half of the psalm [v. 9–26], the note of confidence has eroded and the sense of despair sets in. These were times of national defeat and humiliation. Circumstances forced the people to call on God for deliverance.

Would God deliver? The Psalmist's appeal was made on the grounds that the people had been faithful to God [v. 17–18]. Likewise, we who call on God must do so with a sincere heart. There is nothing that God does not know and no sin that we can conceal from Him.

The Psalmist asks, "Shall not God search this out?" [v. 21] This question implies a bold affirmation on the part of the Psalmist that the people were faithful. The heart is unseen by man but the knowledge of the heart is the speciality of God, "for he knoweth the secrets of the heart". If there is any insincerity, God alone knows.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 58
LUKE 20

THOUGHT

**Pray for a perfect heart to serve God. – 1
Chronicles 28:9**

6 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 45

LESSON FAIREST LORD JESUS

VERSE 1

*My heart is inditing a good
matter: I speak of the things
which I have made touching
the king: my tongue is the
pen of a ready writer.*

Psalm 45 has a unique title: "To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A song of loves". The phrase "upon Shoshannim" also appears in Psalms 69 and 80. According to scholars, it probably refers to an instrument that was shaped like a lily.

Psalm 45 is also the only psalm described as "a song of loves". It is a song in which love is the main theme. For this reason, some say that this psalm was a wedding hymn celebrating the love between Solomon and an Egyptian princess. However, the psalm points clearly and conclusively to the Messiah. Human love, no matter how beautiful, is no comparison to divine love. The writer of Hebrews obviously had in mind the Messiah when he quoted from this psalm [Hebrews 1:8–9, v. 6–7].

The sight of the Messiah calls forth strong emotions from the Psalmist. He said that his "heart is inditing a good matter" [v. 1]; "inditing" literally means "overflowing". The Psalmist was overwhelmed by the very thought of the Messiah that his heart overflowed with praise, and his "tongue is the pen of a ready writer". The picture here is that the Psalmist's mind was saturated with the Messiah that thoughts of Him gushed forth profusely.

The German hymn-writer must have similar emotions when he penned these words about Jesus.

All fairest beauty, heavenly and earthly,
Wondrously, Jesus, is found in Thee;
None can be nearer, fairer or dearer,
Than Thou, my Saviour, art to me.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 59
LUKE 21

QUESTION

Does your life overflow with the grace and love of Christ?

7 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 46–47

LESAON

The river of gladness

PSALM 46:4

*There is a river, the streams
whereof shall make glad the
city of God, the holy place
of the tabernacles of the
most High.*

Psalms 46–47 are hymns of praise celebrating the victories that God wrought for His people. Psalm 46 has been called Luther’s Psalm because of his rendition of “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”. It was said that Luther would sing this psalm whenever he was disheartened. The main idea behind this psalm is that there was some impending danger threatening the people. They were trapped, with their backs against the wall. They had nowhere to run and so they looked up to God—their only refuge and true hope.

Likewise, God is our hiding place—the place of safety and the source of our strength. To Him we retreat and on His strength we rely. When the Psalmist says that God is our strength, it does not mean that we do nothing. Rather, we rely on His strength “as if” it were our own.

Contrast the roaring troubled waters in verses 2–3 with the rivers of gladness in verse 4 of Psalm 46. The contrast is that of raging turmoil without God with the serene calmness that He affords. The former represents destruction and death and the latter, peace and joy.

It does not mean, however, that the believer’s life is always perfectly blissful. That can never be but in the midst of chaos, he has a peace that only our Lord Jesus can give—peace as calm as a gently flowing stream. With that peace in our hearts, our attention is turned to “the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High” in reverent worship.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 60
LUKE 22:1–38

THOUGHT

**When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.**

8 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 48

LESSON

The city of God

VERSE 8

*As we have heard, so have
we seen in the city of the
LORD of hosts, in the city of
our God: God will establish
it for ever.*

The term “the city of God” occurs three times [v. 1, 8] in this psalm. This city is described as magnificent [v. 2], with God as its defender [v. 3]. Hostile kings joined forces to advance against it [v. 4] but were shattered by its power and fled, terrified [v. 5]. Its inhabitants heard, saw how they have been kept safe [v. 8] and rejoiced. An invitation was made to its inhabitants to scrutinise the city and tell it to the next generation [v. 12–13].

While the city is beautiful in her physical appearance, its true beauty lies in the fact that God’s very presence is in it. His presence in turn speaks of His protection, which is why the city is also described as a place of refuge. If you live in such a city, your confidence in its security would be boosted when you examine what makes it so secure. Likewise, when you live under God’s protection, your faith in Him will be strengthened if you spend time examining and reflecting on His attributes that make you safe and sound.

When we become Christians, we have seen how God has cared for and guided us. As we look around, we also hear how God has provided and protected those who have trusted Him in difficult times.

As we learn to trust and walk with Him, we should be able to experience such personal blessings ourselves and say, “As I have heard, so have I seen.”

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 61
LUKE 22:39–71

HYMN

A mighty fortress is our God.

9 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 49

LESSON

Carrying nothing away

VERSE 17

*For when he dieth he shall
carry nothing away: his
glory shall not descend after
him.*

This psalm deals with the foolishness of trusting in riches [v. 5–9] and attempts to convey the truth that death is the great equaliser [v. 10–12]. A comparison was made between those who trust riches and those who trust God [v. 13–15], followed by an appeal to everyone to be wise [v. 16–20].

The foolishness of those who trust their wealth is not that they think that somehow money can redeem their lives from death but rather they think that they themselves are invincible. This can be seen in those who resort to calling their estates after their own names. The thought these people harbour is that if their names remain on some structure, then they will live on. Such people are likened to animals that perish [v. 12, 20].

But what makes the difference in the destiny of those who trust in God? Why are they assured that they will not perish like those who trust in their riches? The difference is God, in Whom the righteous trust. The God Who has the power to send people to the grave is also the One Who can save them from it. God, according to the Psalmist, redeems the soul of the righteous, as opposed to men, who cannot redeem another or themselves.

Relax your grip on earthly treasures, which perish. Place your hand in the hand of Jesus Who has died to redeem you from your sin. We leave this world either with God or with nothing.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 62
LUKE 23

THOUGHT

He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity. – Ecclesiastes 5:10

10 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 50

LESSON

Thanksgiving as sacrifice

VERSE 14

*Offer unto God
thanksgiving; and pay thy
vows unto the most High;*

This is a psalm of judgement. Two judgements are described here. Both are directed at God's covenanted people. One is directed to those who fall into the formal patterns of worship [v. 7–15]. The other is directed to those who worship but have little regard for the law they knew and spoke about [v. 16–22].

The first group has grown to depend on the performance of external sacrifices. Sacrifices are not bad in themselves. They remind the worshipper that all we have comes from God. They also teach us that the only way to approach God is by the atonement of sins. But what this boils down to is that sacrifices are for our benefit, not for God's. They are only good when they inculcate a spirit of thankfulness in the worshipper.

The second group has grown accustomed to think that they can worship God and disobey Him at the same time. They pay lip service to God's law but inwardly have little intention to obey them. They commit and condone lying, slandering, adultery and stealing. Because God remains silent, they think God does not care. They forget that God is a moral God.

Do not be fooled. God cannot be manipulated with sacrifices. When we come before Him, we need to come with the right mind and a thankful heart. And God cannot be mocked. You cannot sin wilfully and not expect to be disciplined. You cannot have Jesus as Saviour without also acknowledging Him as Lord.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 63
LUKE 24

THOUGHT

**Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him?
whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine. –
Job 41:11**



11 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 51

LESSON

Purging with hyssop

VERSE 7

*Purge me with hyssop, and
I shall be clean: wash me,
and I shall be whiter than
snow.*

David had committed two sins—deliberate murder and adultery—for which the Mosaic Law provided no forgiveness through any sacrifices that he might offer. This psalm speaks of his cry for mercy, confession of sins, appeal for cleansing, desire for inward renewal and a promise to teach others the lessons he had learnt.

David was aware that his sins came from a sinful heart. He wanted it completely purged, washed and blotted out. Why purge with hyssop? Hyssop is a plant that can be used as a small brush. It was used to sprinkle blood on one who had been healed of some infectious skin disease in an act of ceremonial cleansing [Leviticus 14:4–6] and on one who had defiled himself by touching a dead body [Numbers 19:18], through a similar ceremony. David understood this and when he asked that God purge him with hyssop, he meant: “Cleanse me with the blood. Forgive me and regard me as cleansed on the basis of the innocent victim whose blood was shed.”

That is how we must come to God too. As sinners, we need forgiveness badly. But without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. It is only on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus Christ that we may find God’s mercy.

Your sin may be as great as David’s, even greater. But however great it is, you will find God to be wonderfully merciful if you will come to Him as David did.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 64
JOHN 1

PRAYER

Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.





12 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 52–54

LESSON

Words can kill

PSALM 52:4

*Thou lovest all devouring
words, O thou deceitful
tongue.*

Psalm 52 talks about a man who boasts all day long, loves evil and uses words as weapons for gain. He trusts not in God but rather in wealth and prospers at the expense of others [Psalm 52:7]. Such a man—one who inevitably does not believe in God—is described as a “fool” in Psalm 53:1. The Psalmist found himself to be surrounded by such people in Psalm 54 but prayed to and placed his trust in God to protect him.

The character the Psalmist referred to in Psalm 52 was actually Doeg [1 Samuel 21:7]. He went to Saul to make a report on the whereabouts of David. At Saul’s command, this led to the massacre of those who had sheltered David. Herein lies the potentially murderous effect of words. They are a powerful force either for evil or good. They also bring this denunciation of Doeg’s character closer to us and warn us of the evil of which we are capable.

People with the “Doeg” character can often be found in our daily workplace. Such a person is usually one who loves to falsely accuse or slander against another colleague when the opportunity permits, with the intention to gain advantage over or destroy the colleague’s career.

What is the believer to do with such people? He knows God is watching from heaven. He puts his trust in God. He prays and gives thanks to God though he does not see the punishment because he knows God will set things right in His own time.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 65
JOHN 2

CAUTION

We must be careful with our words. A prayer we should make at all times and on all occasions is that God will guide our conversation.



13 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 55

LESSON

Christ our burden-bearer

VERSE 22

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

The Psalmist moaned as he appealed to God to hear his prayer. He felt troubled by those who were oppressing him. He cried out to God, pleading for Him to hear his restless complaint. He even expressed a wish to escape his trouble, to fly away and be at rest. David, too, broke forth into an open complaint [v. 12–15, 19–21].

Verses 12 and 15 highlight the betrayal by a most trusted and intimate friend, as the cause of his own anguish and pain. This desperate call to God came in extreme circumstances, which corresponded to the period of Absalom's rebellion in David's life. The close friend who betrayed David could be Ahithophel [2 Samuel 17:1–4].

Sometimes, even our closest friends bow to pressure and turn against us. Constant prayer and faith are the only course of action available. David, like Daniel, prayed three times a day, asking God to destroy his enemies and save him. His only safe course lay in prayer committing his cause to a faithful and merciful God. He came to realise that the best course in times of trouble is not to run away from them but to cast his burden on the Lord.

No Christian is exempt from burden bearing. God wants to carry our burdens. By sustaining us, He will make the burden a blessing. He will never forsake the righteous. He will destroy bloodthirsty and deceitful men who afflict the righteous. David's determination is "but I will trust in Thee".

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 66
JOHN 3

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, teach me to cast every care upon Thee!

14 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 56

LESSON

Faith overcoming fear

VERSE 3

*What time I am afraid, I
will trust in thee.*

The title tells us the story behind this psalm: “When the Philistines took him in Gath” David was a captive in Gath. He pretended to be mad. He was dismissed as a man who had lost his mind. Upon escaping, he recorded his gratitude.

In Gath, David was in danger. He was surrounded by enemies who wanted to destroy him. He was afraid. Fear evoked faith in him. He lamented to the Lord that his enemies were continually twisting his words, plotting to destroy him and dogging his steps. He had no rest from their pursuit. His confidence in the Lord led him to anticipate praying to God for deliverance from this danger. God had delivered him from death before and had kept his feet from falling.

Among the precious gems in this psalm is verse 3, which has given confidence and hope in many fearful hearts in their hour of need. David recognised his fears, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.” This trust in the Lord gave him a growing confidence [v. 11]. In looking to God with trust, David found an antidote to fear.

It is when we are afraid that we trust in God. This principle, “First fear and only then faith,” applies to all areas of our necessities, weaknesses, sorrows and sins. We can conquer our fears. To admit we are afraid is to admit that we are human. Trusting the Lord and then going forward will take the fear out of fear and bring forth grateful praise.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 67
JOHN 4

PRAYER

**Whatever I fear the most, Lord Jesus, I put into
Your loving hands, knowing You will give me
peace and courage.**

15 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 57

LESSON

A cry for mercy

VERSE 5

*Be thou exalted, O God,
above the heavens; let thy
glory be above all the earth.*

David spoke about the calamity that thronged him [v. 1–3], the crisis that threatened him [v. 4–6] and the confidence that thrilled him [v. 7–11]. While hiding from Saul in a cave, David prayed for deliverance from his enemies. He petitioned God to be merciful and cover him with the shadow of His wings. This refers to a place of rest and refuge. He cried to God that He would send help from heaven and save him from injury and injustice. David appreciated God’s mercy and truth.

David felt that his soul was among lions. He compared his enemies to ravenous beasts. He complained primarily about their teeth and tongues—the words that destroy his soul—rather than the actual swords and arrows that could kill his body. They had prepared a net and dug a pit for him—the reason his soul was bowed down in distress. He longed to see God’s glory manifested in the crushing of his foes and the vindication of his cause.

By faith, David’s prayer and complaints were turned into praises. Twice, he declared to God that his heart was steadfast. He praised God and heartily sang His praises among the nations. To sum up, David expressed his desire that God be exalted among the heavens and His glory fill the earth.

The world thrills when human beings are exalted, but those who know God rejoice when He is exalted. Just like David, let us learn to exalt our Lord Jesus in spite of our daily trials.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 68
JOHN 5

THOUGHT

Praising God turns burdens into blessings.

BIBLE LESSON*Psalms 58***LESSON****The unrighteous judges****VERSE 11**

*So that a man shall say,
Verily there is a reward for
the righteous: verily he is
a God that judgeth in the
earth.*

This psalm is an imprecatory psalm, calling for God to judge the unjust judges and corrupt rulers of David's day. The people described in this psalm are habitual offenders—people who are impervious to correction. “The wicked,” said David, “are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies” [v. 3]. He compared their wickedness to the deadly poison of a serpent and their devouring of justice to the great teeth of young lions. David saw them as obstinately and incurably evil.

David boldly prayed to God for five types of destruction to come upon his enemies: break their teeth, vanish as water evaporates, become blunted arrows, be as a melting snail and become lifeless as a stillborn child [v. 6–8]. He prayed that they might be disabled to prevent them from committing any further mischief. He knew that the destruction of the wicked would be swift.

David also spoke of the righteous as washing their feet in the blood of the wicked, meaning that there would be an abundance of bloodshed [Psalm 68:23]. In this psalm, the wicked are judged and condemned, but over the godly, the sacred “*al-taschith*” (destroy not) is solemnly pronounced. God always protects His children.

The spiritual message of verse 11 is that the righteous will triumph over the wicked, whose overthrow will be final and fatal. Let us heed the warning of Hebrews 10:31 because God's judgement is sure [Hebrews 9:27].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 69
JOHN 6

THOUGHT

God's judgement may not be immediate, but it is inevitable.



17 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 59

LESSON

Trusting in God for deliverance

VERSE 9

*Because of his strength will
I wait upon thee: for God is
my defence.*

In this psalm, David cried out to God for protection, when Saul sought to kill him. Was not David faithful in serving King Saul? Did he not behave himself wisely and obeyed Saul when he was set over the king's men of war [1 Samuel 18:5]? Clearly, Saul was envious of David's success and did not want David to overshadow him.

Though innocent, David became a fugitive in his own home. Nevertheless, he had great faith in God, and maintained his communion with the God Who had protected him in his encounter with the lion and the bear [1 Samuel 17:37]. Thus, when all seemed hopeless, David still had confidence in God. Note also that David did not take matters into his own hands but cried out instead to God, trusting in His divine protection.

Let us learn precious lessons from David in this psalm. Some situations may seem grim, with no way out of our predicament. But God is in control, and He knows what our end will be. He will provide what is needed in His perfect timing.

Let us neither fret nor worry. Look to our God and cry unto Him, and wait with patience and faith for His answer [Jeremiah 33:3]. Let us also not trust in our own wisdom but, having cried out to God, let us look to God's Word for the solutions to our predicament.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 70
JOHN 7

MEDITATION

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. – Proverbs 3:5–6





18 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 60–61

LESSON

**Falling into the hands of
the Living God**

PSALM 60:3

*Thou hast shewed thy
people hard things: thou
hast made us to drink the
wine of astonishment.*

David lamented over the trials that God had placed upon the Israelites because they had been a stiff-necked people, and pleaded with God to turn His face towards them again. Many times in the past, they had disobeyed God and incurred His wrath, resulting in God dealing harshly with them.

Yet, God had been long-suffering and very gracious to them. David rejoiced that the Lord had enabled him to gain victory over the Philistines, and conquer the surrounding nations. He acknowledged that it was God Who had led his army into victory, and his help did not come from other men. Indeed, through God's might, David had done valiantly, and had trodden down his enemies.

We have also been a stiff-necked people and have disobeyed God in the past. Perhaps, even now some of us are trying to run away from God. May the Lord be merciful to us! Let us learn from David's psalms that true peace will only come to our hearts when we draw close to Him. Let us spend our quiet time with the Lord by reading His Word, and praying.

Let us lay our petitions before God, and have faith to believe that He will hear and answer our prayers in His perfect time, according to His perfect will.

He is able to deliver thee,
He is able to deliver thee;
Tho by sin opprest,
Go to Him for rest:
Our God is able to deliver thee.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 71
JOHN 8

THOUGHT

**For his anger endureth but a moment; in his
favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but
joy cometh in the morning. – Psalm 30:5**



19 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 62–63

LESSON

We shall not be moved.

PSALM 62:2

*He only is my rock and my
salvation; he is my defence;
I shall not be greatly
moved.*

David praised God and called attention to the protection that God had given him. God had never failed David, and He will do the same for all of us who have put our trust in Him. Indeed, how long can man imagine mischief against another, before God steps in to rebuke him? Let us, therefore, put our trust in God. Let us wait only upon God and pour our hearts to Him, like David did.

There are men who put their trust in their own wicked capabilities. They steal and oppress to gain wealth. But they are in danger of God's wrath and judgement, for He renders to every man according to his work. If anyone has put his trust in this manner, let him repent and turn to God, Who will show mercy to those who turn to Him. Remember the thief who hung on the cross beside our Lord Jesus? He repented and received God's forgiveness and went to be with Jesus in heaven.

Let us rejoice that God's good news of salvation is freely available to all. Let us praise Him, and follow hard after Him. We should be sanctified and grow to be more like Him daily. Let us go to God's Word daily and commune with Him in our quiet time, so that we may have a closer walk with Him.

Finally, let us hide His Word in our hearts so that we may not sin against Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 72
JOHN 9

PRAYER

Lord, help me to put my trust in You today, in everything that I do, and in every decision that I make. Lead and direct me so that I may glorify You in all that I do.

20 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON
Psalms 64–65

LESSON
God's provisions

PSALM 65:4

*Blessed is the man whom
thou choosest, and causest
to approach unto thee, that
he may dwell in thy courts:
we shall be satisfied with
the goodness of thy house,
even of thy holy temple.*

God not only cares for His children, in protecting them from their enemies, but He also cares for them by providing for their needs. David recognised this and praised God for this wonderful knowledge. Our God is a living God Who hears the prayers of His children. He is the Almighty God Who is also able to do all that He promises.

How can you earn the right to be a child of God? It is not by any works of righteousness or any ritualistic formula. You can only come to God with a contrite heart, and confess that you are a sinner. Then, put your trust in the saving grace of the Lord Jesus, for He has paid for all our sins on the Cross of Calvary.

How does God provide for His children? He provides for their material needs by blessing them with bountiful harvests and livestock. Our Lord is the Creator and Master of this earth. He commands the rain to water it, and it is done. Therefore, the goodness of the earth comes from God. Our God is also the Sustainer of this world. Without His sustaining grace, our world will be in much worse shape than it is in today.

Therefore, God is the sole provider for all our needs. Let us look to Him and put all our trust in Him only for our physical and spiritual needs. Trust in God and thank Him for His sustaining grace.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 73
JOHN 10

MEDITATION

Read Psalm 23.



21 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 66–67

LESSON

**Making sense of the trials
of life**

PSALM 66:12

*Thou hast caused men
to ride over our heads;
we went through fire and
through water: but thou
broughtest us out into a
wealthy place.*

Our God is truly mighty and has wrought many wondrous deeds. The Psalmist calls on the believer to remember all that God has done for us and give Him praise. When we come together as the body of Christ and sing praises to His wonderful Name, we bear witness to His works that others may also see the truth and come to believe in Him. How can we be a true witness for Christ? Live a holy life and serve God in the local church.

The Psalmist recalls God's works among the Israelites. Indeed they were terrible to behold. He made the waters to part so that His people could cross on dry land, not once, but twice. God made the Israelites go through trials, and purged them as they journeyed to the Promised Land. He worked all things for their ultimate good, so that they could go and possess the land that He had promised to their forefathers.

Have you been through seemingly difficult trials in your life? May this be a comfort to you: God is working all things for your ultimate good, so that you may emerge a better Christian. Let us, like the Psalmist, draw closer to God, even as we go through these trials of life. Be not discouraged but go to God's house to offer your sacrifices of prayer and service to Him.

There is a great blessing in serving God. He will bless us and make us to sing our praises unto Him once again.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 74
JOHN 11

MEDITATION

**But my God shall supply all your need according
to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. –
Philippians 4:19**





22 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 68

LESSON

Victories through the blessings of God

VERSE 19

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.

Psalm 68 is a song of military triumph, which King David wrote to celebrate the victories that he had gained over his enemies through the blessings of God. In this prologue, we read that God scatters his enemies who are wicked [v. 1–2] and cares for the weak and abandoned [v. 5–6]. This is a revelation of God’s character—a “father to the fatherless, a defender of widows”, One Who “sets the lonely in families”, and Who “leads forth the prisoners with singing”. Our faithful God is always there to uplift the downtrodden and comfort the lonely.

Verses 7–18 record the victorious march from Sinai to Canaan, the Promised Land, with its culmination in the entrance of the Ark of God. With the people of God established in Zion, David as king and the Ark in God’s sanctuary, the people praised God, and they would continue to trust in Him [v. 19–35].

While Psalm 68 is a song of military triumph, its lesson is applicable to us today. Have God’s saving acts in Christ resulted in your salvation? If yes, then you ought also to praise and trust Him. It is because of Jesus Christ that we have a steadfast hope of eternal life.

Let us remember that even though we may experience discouragement and defeat in life from time to time, we can still press on in steady faith, knowing that Jesus is on the throne and His sovereign will is accomplished in our lives.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 75
JOHN 12

THOUGHT

Let us be encouraged that we will reign with our Saviour one day.





23 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 69

LESSON

Plea for help in suffering

VERSE 13

*But as for me, my prayer is
unto thee, O LORD, in an
acceptable time: O God, in
the multitude of thy mercy
hear me, in the truth of thy
salvation.*

King David penned this psalm when he was in affliction. He complained of the great distress and trouble he was in and earnestly begged God to relieve and succour him [v. 1–21]. He sought the judgements of God upon his persecutors [v. 22–29]. Finally, he concluded with a voice of joy and praise, with the assurance that God would be his help [v. 30–36].

Two things seem to make the Psalmist's pain particularly intense. First, his enemies hated him without reason and opposed him without cause [v. 4]. Second, he was pleading with God for help and God had not answered [v. 3]. Despite being unjustly treated, David acknowledged his foolishness and guilt before God [v. 5]. This was the mark of godliness that set David apart from his enemies and kept him close to God.

In this world there is always pain and evil. God does not always remove the pain or trouble. Jesus prayed in great agony in Gethsemane, asking that the cup he was about to drink be taken from him, but God did not remove the cup. Our Lord Jesus had to drink it. God nevertheless heard His prayers and sent angels to minister to Him and strengthen Him so that He might go through His trial gloriously for His Father.

Have you ever gone through times like that? Whatever cross you are given, tell God about it and know that He will hear your prayers and come to strengthen you.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 76
JOHN 13

THOUGHT

**When Satan tempts, and doubts and fears assail,
look to the Lamb of God.**





24 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 70–71

LESSON

A psalm for old age

PSALM 71:18

*Now also when I am old
and grayheaded, O God,
forsake me not; until I have
shewed thy strength unto
this generation, and thy
power to every one that is
to come.*

In Psalm 70, David was in serious trouble. His enemies not only mocked him but also wanted to take his life. What would you do in such times? The answer for those who know God is to go to God in prayer. David prayed that God would give him quick deliverance. David prayed that his enemies would be shamed and confused in their persecution of him. Finally, despite his own troubles, David remembered and prayed for the righteous people who would follow God and do the right thing.

Psalm 71 is a psalm written by David in his old age. He began with a prayer of trust and confidence that God would deliver and not cast him out. David also prayed that his enemies might be put to shame [v. 1–13]. He praised the Lord for His righteousness, salvation, wondrous works, strength, power and comfort bestowed upon him on every side [v. 14–21]. David ended by saying that he would sing with the harp, his lips would greatly rejoice and his tongue would also talk of God's righteousness all day long [v. 22–24].

Old age is something that comes to every one of us. Let us be like David and look to the past to remember God's righteousness and faithfulness, and also look to the future to see the works yet to be done. You are here now because God has more work for you to do.

What are you doing for Jesus?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 77
JOHN 14

THOUGHT

Despite our weariness and frequent lack of faith, let us look to God Who is our present help and ultimate deliverance.





25 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 72

LESSON

A coming kingdom of the Messiah

VERSE 17

His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

David prayed that Solomon would be endowed with God's justice and God's righteousness, and that he would judge the people with righteousness [v. 1–2]. Righteousness had been a character of Solomon since the beginning of his reign. However, in his latter years, Solomon turned away from the Lord, followed other gods and oppressed the people with high taxes to finance his building projects.

The key to a prosperous and blessed nation is a government that rules with equity and justice according to the revealed will of God. We should all pray for our leaders in government and those in our church that they will be governed by God's justice and righteousness and will lead the country and the church according to the will and purpose of God.

David then prophesied about a coming kingdom—a righteous kingdom [v. 3], an everlasting kingdom [v. 5], a kingdom of perfect peace [v. 7], a universal kingdom of great expanse [v. 8–11], a kingdom of perfect submission of its inhabitants [v. 12–14] and a kingdom through which all people on earth are blessed [v. 15–17]. These passages could only refer to the Kingdom of Christ, Who will rule as a perfect ruler.

In this fallen world, it does not always happen that the “righteous flourish.” Some see this as proof that God does not exist. That is not true. Rather, it is proof that men do not carry out the will of God and their governments—even the best of them—are imperfect.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 78:1–29
JOHN 15

PRAYER

Father Almighty, turn our eyes heavenward so that we shall not be ensnared by the evils of this perishing world and keep us ever vigilant, watching for Your coming and serving You fervently.





26 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 73

LESSON

The 11th-hour God

VERSE 22

So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

It is natural for a person to see injustice all around him and feel discouraged because nothing has been done to right the wrongs. There are many who argue that God does not exist in this world because there is so much cruelty, unrighteousness, injustice and exploitation, with the rich getting richer and the poor dying in hunger. Where is God in all these? “They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth ... And they say, How doth God know? And is there knowledge in the most High?” [v. 8–11]

All these things the Psalmist thought to himself. He did not dare tell anyone in his congregation, lest he should cause those who were weak in faith to stumble. “If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children” [v. 15].

However, the God of the Bible does not hide things; He confronts tough situations. Truly, if God agrees with the Psalmist in hiding tough questions, He (being sovereign) would have omitted verse 15. In fact, a Christian who has never been faced with tough questions about God and salvation is likely to treat his faith lightly.

When the Psalmist entered the sanctuary of God, where His Word was preached, the tough questions on the attributes of God, eternity, heaven and judgement were discussed and answered, he realised the end of the wicked. He became certain of their destruction in the light of eternity.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 78:30–58
JOHN 16

THOUGHT

Sometimes God seems slow to mete out justice and appears indifferent. However, His timing is perfect—neither too early, nor too late.





27 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 74

LESSON

Jealous for the authority of God

VERSE 22

*Arise, O God, plead thine
own cause: remember how
the foolish man reproacheth
thee daily.*

We know that God is sovereign, which means that He can do whatever pleases Him. He is the great God Who orders everything to happen in the way He sees fit. The laws of nature are subject to His will. He subdues every force that challenges Him [v. 13–17].

Yet there are times when it appears that God is very tolerant with the wicked of this world. We can certainly identify ourselves with the man who prayed: “Lord, they have not only abused us, but they have been, and are, abusive to You; what is done against us, for Your sake, does, by consequence, reflect upon You. But that is not all; they have directly and immediately reproached You, and blasphemed Your name.”

Today, militant secularism is making headway in the West and many countries espouse a humanistic worldview. They are hostile towards religion, with Christianity in particular. In the so-called Western countries, Christians are increasingly losing ground and Christianity is being forced out of the public domain in the name of tolerance. Christians have lost their jobs for speaking out for the faith.

What is the Christian to do? Keep silent? Or speak out? Peter’s response in such a situation is this: “We ought to obey God rather than men” [Acts 5:29]. God uses people [Romans 10:14–15] to bring the Gospel to the world and He also expects us to pray that justice, righteousness and peace will prevail on earth; that His “will be done on earth as it is in heaven”.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 78:59–72
JOHN 17

PRAYER

**When Christians suffer, Your name is put to
shame. Arise, O God, subdue the wicked and
proud that You may be glorified.**





28 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 75–76

LESSON

Human limitation

PSALM 75:6

*For promotion cometh
neither from the east, nor
from the west, nor from the
south.*

There has been a phenomenal growth in the “positive thinking” philosophy, so much so that many are led to believe that they can do anything, or be anyone they wish to be so long as they think positively. When they fail to be what they hoped for, or failed at getting what they had lusted after, they become devastated. However, they cannot show their sadness because they have to think “positively”. So they continue to wear a fake smile in public.

It is good if one has an ambition to move up the ladder in one’s career. In fact, the book of Proverbs contains sound advice on how a person ought to conduct himself to succeed in life. “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise” [Proverbs 6:6]. “He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him” [Proverbs 28:22].

There are many books that teach a person how to advance in his career through whatever means possible. However, the danger comes if one is obsessed in moving ahead at any costs and using whatever means. To the rich, the power-hungry and the wicked, God warns them explicitly, “I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn: Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck” [Psalm 75:4–5].

We, who know God personally, should work honestly and hard, leaving the rest to Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 79
JOHN 18

THOUGHT

The world tells us to work “smart”, tell half-truths and make money, draw huge salary and bonuses, and retire early. But when the “wine is red” [judgement from God is ripe], God would pour out His fury on the world that knows Him not.



1 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 77

LESSON

The importance of church history

VERSE 11

I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

This psalm speaks of a person undergoing intense suffering and pain. Though it has much sadness, we can be confident that it will end well because it begins with a prayer. The Psalmist was full of complaints—loud complaints—but he directed them to God, and turned them all into prayers—very earnest and persistent vocal prayers. He could have prayed silently but he gave vent to his grief, hoping to gain some ease. He took the right way in dealing with his grief. He did not seek advice from friends. Neither did he drown his sorrows with strong drink.

In the day of the Psalmist's trouble he did not seek diversion in business or recreation to shake off his trouble but sought God for His favour and grace. But God, it seems, did not answer his prayers! The Psalmist was overwhelmed. Sleepless nights followed, then recollections of the "good old times" only resulted in an uneasy questioning of God [v. 7–9].

His despondency of spirit, distrust of God under affliction, doubts and fears proceeding from the weakness of faith was leading him nowhere. So he tried a different approach. "And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High" [v. 10]. He now recalled the works of God, His works of creation and providence, His government of the world, and particularly His regard for his own people, and His preservation of them.

Finally, God heard him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 80
JOHN 19

THOUGHT

When doubts and fears get the better of us, we should not let it spiral down the road of unbelief and despondency. Call upon God. Remember what He has done in history and also for us individually.

2 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 78:1–41

LESSON

**Laying up inheritance for
our children**

VERSE 4

*We will not hide them from
their children, shewing to
the generation to come the
praises of the LORD, and his
strength, and his wonderful
works that he hath done.*

This psalm is a narrative of the great mercies that God bestowed upon Israel, the great sins wherewith they had provoked Him, and the many tokens of His displeasure at them. History itself is put into a psalm or song so that it might be better remembered and transmitted throughout posterity, and the singing making it more than just a plain narrative.

The Israelites were distinctly and repeatedly commanded to impart religious knowledge to their children [Deuteronomy 6:6–7]. Their history was peculiarly rich in marvellous and glorious deeds that God had done on their behalf, and in judgements with which He visited them by reason of their numerous and heinous sins. It was plentifully stored with wise teaching and helpful encouragement to faithfulness and grave warning against evil.

We have infinite treasures of divine knowledge at our disposal in the Bible. The spiritual wealth of past ages, with the best utterances of wise and holy men, has been handed down to us in good Christian books. What a noble and precious heritage is ours in this respect!

Let us enrich ourselves spiritually so that we can lay up an inheritance, incorruptible and eternal, for our children. Let us endeavour to represent God to our children truthfully, in His divine beauty, in His all-sufficiency, and in His perfect reliability, so that they may be attracted to Him, and be led to rest in Him with supreme and unflinching trust.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 81
JOHN 20

THOUGHT

**For the children ought not to lay up for the
parents, but the parents for the children. – 2
Corinthians 12:14b**

3 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 78:42–72

LESSON

God neither slumbers nor sleeps.

VERSE 65

Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

In this paragraph, the Psalmist spoke of the plagues with which God visited Egypt, and by means through which Pharaoh and the Egyptians were humbled, and the Israelites were delivered from their bondage. He did not mention all the plagues, and those that he mentioned were not chronological in their occurrence. The matter and scope of this psalm are the same with the preceding one, showing what great mercies God had bestowed upon Israel, how disobedient they had been, what judgements He had brought upon them for their sins and how, in judgement, He remembered mercy at last.

Though God withdrew from Israel for a season, He did not cast them off forever. He came again to their help as a mighty man refreshed by sleep and wine, and shouting for the battle. This is just figurative or poetical. God never sleeps. His control of human affairs is continuous. His sovereignty is calm, eternal and unchangeable. His sovereign purposes are ever being developed under His superintendence.

In times of severe testing, divine chastening, or unwelcome afflictions, God may seem far away, indifferent to the interest of His people, as though He is asleep and ignorant of the state of their affairs. But when His purposes are revealed, God will manifest Himself and we will come forth as gold, with the peaceable fruit of righteousness, sanctified and established in the holy faith.

Let us not judge the Lord by feeble sense but trust Him for His grace. Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 82
JOHN 21

THOUGHT

Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan His work in vain; God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain. – William Cowper

4 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 79

LESSON

Profane intruders in sacred place

VERSE 1

*O God, the heathen are
come into thine inheritance;
thy holy temple have they
defiled; they have laid
Jerusalem on heaps.*

This psalm was penned with this event in view: the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the woeful havoc inflicted on the Jewish nation by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. God's own people had defiled the Temple by their sins, and God suffered their enemies to defile it by their insolence. It was a representation of the deplorable condition that the people of God were in at that time. It consisted of a petition to God for succour and relief that their enemies might be reckoned with, that their sins might be pardoned and that they might be delivered.

The Church is the abode of God. He dwells in it by His Spirit. Desecrating intruders like ritualism have entered through ceremonies, forms and symbols without the worship of God in spirit and in truth. Human philosophies and self-cultured religion have diluted the Gospel of Christ, despising the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

"You are the temple of God" [1 Corinthians 3:16a]. Worldliness, carnality, selfishness, hatred and impurity are the intruders that have defiled God's holy temple. The human soul is often compared to a "whited sepulchre" or "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" rather than the dwelling place of God.

These desecrating intruders must be expelled from our temple or they will lay it in ruins. These unholy spirits that have entered our human soul must be cast out or this "temple of God" will become a "synagogue of Satan".

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 83
ACTS 1

PRAYER

**Stretch out Thine arm, victorious King, My
reigning sins subdue,
Drive the old Dragon from his seat, With all his
hellish crew.**

– Isaac Watts

5 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 80

LESSON

Prayer for restoration

VERSE 19

*Turn us again, O LORD
God of hosts, cause thy face
to shine; and we shall be
saved.*

This psalm was composed on an occasion when some calamity had befallen on the tribes of Israel after their division into two kingdoms and before the captivity of either of them. The Psalmist prayed for the tokens of God's presence, complained of heavy distress and concluded with a prayer for restoration.

The thrice-uttered prayer, "Turn us again, O God", shows that the Jews were conscious that they had departed from God and desirous of being turned penitently to Him as a means of regaining His favour. The loss of the intense consciousness of peace and joy, the waning of enthusiasm for and zeal towards the Lord in His service are signs of backsliding.

There are many signs of real spiritual decline in many in the Church of Christ. Absorption in business has numbed the zeal of many. Marriage and cares of domestic life have taken the lofty aspiration out of many and ended their usefulness. Worldly success has stifled growth and faith in Christ. The zeal, enthusiasm, usefulness, consecration and joy experienced before had diminished.

To such persons, God often sends trouble in some form or other as His messenger to recall them from their backsliding. Has He sent any to you? Be thankful that He is still seeking you and make the prayer of the text as your own.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 84
ACTS 2

PRAYER

**Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove, With all Thy
quick'ning powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love, In these cold hearts
of ours.**

– Isaac Watts

6 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 81–82

LESSON

Abandoned by God

PSALM 81:12

*So I gave them up unto
their own hearts' lust: and
they walked in their own
counsels.*

The Psalmist here again dwelt upon the history of his country. His great forte seemed to be rehearsing the past in admonitory psalmody. This psalm was penned to assist them in their solemn feast days—to praise God for Who He is and what He has done for them. It was to admonish them concerning their obligations to God, and to warn them of the dangers of revolting against Him and the blessedness of keeping close to Him.

When Israel hardened their hearts against God and persistently provoked Him to anger with their own wicked devices, He gave them up unto their own hearts' lust. And they walked in their own counsels. They refused to be governed by Him, so He allowed them to attempt self-government. They refused to listen to Him, so He ceased to speak to them.

“God’s leaving one’s soul to one’s lust, is far worse than leaving him to all the lions in the world. Alas! [Lust] will tear the soul worse than a lion can do the body, and rend it in pieces, when there is none to deliver it. God’s giving them up to their own wills, that they walked in their own counsels, is in effect a giving them up to eternal wrath and woe.” – Treasury of David

O dreadful word and of infinite concern to us who name the name of Christ that we secure to ourselves the Spirit’s leading. The same will the Spirit do upon our rejecting or resisting of His leading. He may long strive, but He will “not always strive”.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 85
ACTS 3

THOUGHT

A man may be given up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the soul may be saved, but to be given up to sin is a thousand times worse, because that is the fruit of divine anger, in order to the damnation of the soul. – Charles Spurgeon

7 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 83

LESSON

Fear not, for it is God's battle.

VERSE 4

They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

This verse conveys the very thoughts of God's enemies. They will show Israel no mercy and will not hesitate to destroy it. Since her independence in 1948, Israel has survived several attacks from her neighbours. Each time, Israel prevailed against overwhelming odds. Today, Israel continues to face threats of annihilation from these same enemies.

In this context, Psalm 83 is a prayer for the defence of Israel. It is also a reaffirmation of God's faithfulness. Though her enemies would surround her like a flood, God would deliver Israel. Psalm 83 is a prayer to God also that His truth and righteousness will prevail, and the world will have to bow and acknowledge Him as God one day. Any war on God's people will be a declaration of war on God Himself; someday everyone will recognise and admit that God is supreme [v. 18].

The Apostle Paul said, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" [Philippians 2:9–10].

At the personal level, we know that we are not left alone to fend for ourselves in this world. God-fearing Christians have no shortage of persecutors. Our Lord Jesus said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" [John 15:20]. The hope for believers is that, by our lives and through our trials, we see God's faithfulness so that others may know that Jehovah alone is God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 86
ACTS 4

CHALLENGE

Do not wait for your darkest hour before calling out to God [v. 1]. Keep His commandments and walk right with Him daily.

8 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON *Psalms 84–85*

LESSON **A desire to be in the house of our Lord**

PSALM 84:10

*For a day in thy courts is
better than a thousand. I
had rather be a doorkeeper
in the house of my God,
than to dwell in the tents of
wickedness.*

Charles Spurgeon called Psalm 84 “one of the choicest of the collection”. He added: “If the 23rd be the most popular, the 103rd the most joyful, the 119th the most deeply experimental, the 55th most plaintive, this is one of the most sweet of the Psalms of Peace.” The primary interpretation of Psalm 84 breathes out the deep longings of the exiled Jews to be back at the Temple in Jerusalem.

Verse 10 aptly sums up their ultimate desire to be with God in heaven. Nothing can be compared to a day in God’s presence. It is to be chosen over everything else—better to be a doorkeeper of God’s house than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Note the contrast between the “house of my God” and the “tents of wickedness”. One is permanent while the other is pitched temporarily.

The choices we make every day reflect our spiritual maturity. No one, when asked, will choose to dwell in the “tents of wickedness”. Nevertheless, wickedness comes in various alluring forms and sin is pleasurable. So tempting is it to cast our lot with the world that we often not only stumble into tents of wickedness but also actively look for them. Worldliness has indeed become an idol in today’s materialistic society.

Humble yourself and recognise your own frailty. The Apostle Peter said that he would not deny Jesus but within a night, he denied Jesus not once but three times. If this happened to Peter, what about us?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 87
ACTS 5

PRAYER

Lord, help me desire one thing only and that is to “dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple” [Psalm 27:4].

9 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 86–87

LESSON

Fear God and keep His commandments.

PSALM 86:11

*Teach me thy way, O LORD;
I will walk in thy truth:
unite my heart to fear thy
name.*

Here is the key to King David's greatness. He is known as a man after God's own heart because he knew his heart and how prone he was to wander from God. That was why he prayed for God to teach him His way and give him an undivided heart. More importantly, he prayed for the fear of God.

Most of us ask for deliverance from trouble, help in time of need and provision for daily living when we pray. We are not as concerned about learning God's ways or serving Him with an undivided heart. In other words, we want the blessings without the devotion. We yearn for God's blessings but we also want it our own way. We no longer seek the fear of God. David was not like that. We should therefore begin our next prayer by asking God to teach us His way. How do we learn His way? The starting point is the fear of God [Proverbs 1:7; 2:5].

The fear of God should be our guiding principle. It should be the rod that keeps us from straying. If we have no fear of God, what then can be the check in our lives?

The Bible is explicit regarding the fear of God—Deuteronomy 10:12, 20. Let us therefore fear God for it is absolutely necessary for every child of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 88
ACTS 6

THOUGHT

**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this
is the whole duty of man. – Ecclesiastes 12:13**

10 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 88

LESSON

God's divine plan

VERSE 3

For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

Psalm 88 is the darkest and saddest prayer in the Psalter. It is the gloomiest psalm in the Scriptures and the nadir of human sorrow and suffering. We already see the writer lamenting that his life is drawing close to the grave in verse 3. The rest of the chapter sees the verses moving from one expression of profound misery and despair to another until they finally end in utter darkness. Whoever devises from the Scriptures a philosophy in which everything turns out right will be proved wrong by this psalm.

Have you ever felt like the writer before? With the weight of the world on our shoulders and the extreme stress of modern living, how many of us have problems that penetrate to our innermost soul? Our cries for help have gone unanswered and no relief is in sight. Psalm 88 stands as a witness that life does not always have a happy ending. (And the Chinese consider 8 a lucky number.) Nevertheless, let us be like Job, who did not lose his faith in God or curse God.

Psalm 88 is the inspired Word of God, and He has a reason for recording it for us. He is divine while we are only human. His ways are not our ways. His ways are higher and perfect.

We must therefore keep the faith and know that all things work together for the good of those who love the Lord [Romans 8:28].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 89:1–25
ACTS 7

THOUGHT

Let Psalm 88 be a sharp reminder that we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies [Romans 8:22–23].

11 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 89

LESSON

God's faithfulness

VERSE 1

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

James H Fillmore (1849–1936) wrote the music and this verse provided the lyrics to one of the most familiar Christian hymns of our times. This verse—and the next three—establishes the theme of Psalm 89—faithfulness. Psalm 89 is a poetic exposition of 2 Samuel 7, in which God established an everlasting covenant with David.

God had promised to make David the mightiest king on earth and keep his descendants on the throne forever. However, Jerusalem was destroyed and kings no longer reigned there. These verses can only look forward prophetically to the future reign of Jesus Christ.

Men and women are unfaithful. We want people to rely on us but we are often unreliable ourselves. We make promises and we break them. God, however, is true. He has been utterly faithful throughout the ages. What He promises, He delivers. Have you experienced God's faithfulness? In times of temptation and trouble, He is there for us [1 Corinthians 10:13]. In times of sin, He is faithful to forgive if we confess them [1 John 1:9]. Finally, if we keep His commandments, He will be faithful to love us [Deuteronomy 7:9].

What a wonderful God we have. His faithfulness reaches the clouds [Psalm 36:5]. Even when we believe not, He abideth faithful [2 Timothy 2:13]. What further assurance do we need as children of God? Let us not take this privilege for granted and let us likewise, in our own small way, be faithful in keeping His statutes.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 89:26–52
ACTS 8

PRAYER

Let the following hymn resound in us as we remember God's faithfulness: Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father! There is no shadow of turning with Thee.

12 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 90

LESSON

Who establishes and causes to flourish?

VERSE 17

*And let the beauty of the
LORD our God be upon
us: and establish thou the
work of our hands upon us;
yea, the work of our hands
establish thou it.*

In the last verse of this psalm, to whom is the Psalmist talking and for what is he really asking? The answer lies in the partnership between God and man. Divine work is done in this world through human hands. When God acts, He does so—more often than not—through us. Sometimes we take for granted that we will be blessed and forget our responsibility to labour with God through asking for His power and wisdom to establish our work.

Human actions have real consequences in both the human and divine realms. Asking for the work of “our” hands to prosper is really asking for God’s work to be realised through us. Our work reflects the glory of the God Who made us.

It is important for you to examine whether or not God has worked in and through you. While your life may be characterised by limitations and frustrations, you are not only able to pray that God will change your circumstances but that He will also change your life.

God invites us to partner Him through a life of prayer and obedience to His commands. The simplest and yet most impactful prayers that we can pray are for God’s favour to be upon us and for Him to establish our work. Excel and seek God’s blessing on your work. The work of our hands is transitive to the work of His hands. This pleases Him. Whatever you need to do, do it today!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 90
ACTS 9

THOUGHT

Our meaning in life comes not through what we do, but through the One for Whom and through Whom we do it.

13 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 91

LESSON

Security in responsibility

VERSE 11

*For he shall give his angels
charge over thee, to keep
thee in all thy ways.*

The key verse for today tells us that God puts angels in charge of our well being. They are to keep us safe in all that we do. They hold our hands so that we don't stumble on stones in our path. How much more can we ask? Yet, there are many who say, "But I fell ill and almost died", or "No matter what I did, the problem did not get solved like I expected".

God promises to keep us safe but when we walk away from God and His path of righteousness, we leave the safety that God provides and wander into the peril of the devil. To enjoy God's blessings, we need to follow Him in all things. Then we will enjoy the blessings of His refuge and safe protection. We can hide under His wings even when we are facing pain and difficulty. In the past, He had seen His people through plagues and injury, nightmares and terrors, and perilous pestilence. He is still the refuge we need today.

God orders angels to watch over us to keep us from harm. What a blessed thought, that God has committed angels to watch over our every situation. As you think about angels and their ministry, keep in mind your responsibility to stay in the will of God and abide with Him.

Thank God for the "invisible" ministry of His angels and for the part they have in your victory over Satan.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 91
ACTS 10

THOUGHT

Our security and our responsibility lead to our victory.

14 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 92–93

LESSON

Thanksgiving due to God

PSALM 92:1

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

When we wake up in the morning to face the day, we don't know what the day will hold for us. It is good that we first thank God in advance for His loving-kindness and tender mercies towards us. We may not know what the day has in store for us but we know that God is the One Who holds the day for us. Whatever we may face, He promises to fill it with His loving-kindness.

At the end of the day, we should thank Him by declaring His faithfulness every night. It is good to look back at the end of the day, recount the ways that He has proven His faithfulness to us, and thank Him for each of them. There may be many times in the night when we awaken—perhaps to fret over the events of the day or worry over what may happen tomorrow. It is good, at such times, to declare His faithfulness—even at every watch of the night. In other words, our expressions of thanks are to be offered to Him all the time—morning and night.

It is right that our songs of praise to God and our declaration of His character be in the mode of prayer. Our prayers should be praises and our praises should be prayers. Thanksgiving should be a prayer or praise, and they should be expressions of thanksgiving.

If you are the recipient of God's saving grace, give thanks unto the Lord and sing praises to His holy Name.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 92
ACTS 11

THOUGHT

In all circumstances, it is always good to give thanks to our God because our God will prove to be good in all His ways.

15 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 94

LESSON

The comforts of God

VERSE 19

*In the multitude of my
thoughts within me thy
comforts delight my soul.*

Sometimes life gets so hectic. Life is often filled with unexpected problems or crises. Unrest and despair darken the way of even the strongest Christian. We all have those “multitude of thoughts” that come rushing at us.

As a result, we forget that we have such wonderful resources at our fingertips. As Christians, because of the refuge we have in God, we should strive to maintain composure and stability in spite of stress and difficulty. We cannot escape the pressures and dark shadows in our lives but we can face them with the spiritual strength that God provides.

When God permits trials, He also provides comfort. As we are held securely “near to the heart of God”, we find the rest, comfort, joy and peace that only Jesus our Redeemer can provide. Because of this, we can live every day with an inner calm and courage. We need not be anxious or get flustered by the world and what lies before us. We can take life one day at a time with a calm spirit because we have so much sweet comfort from the Lord, which will soothe us and give us strength and encouragement every day. Are you resting in God’s comforts?

Rejoice in the comfort God gives. When you receive God’s comfort, be sure to pass it on. Comfort others and give them assistance. Then give to God the glory from Whom the comfort is drawn. Blessings are in store. You are assured of God’s loving care now and forever.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 93
ACTS 12

THOUGHT

There is a place of quiet rest, near to the heart of God.

16 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 95

LESSON

Time to seek the Lord

VERSE 10

*Forty years long was
I grieved with this
generation, and said, It is a
people that do err in their
heart, and they have not
known my ways.*

God was grieved at the things that the generation of the children of Israel did while they were in the wilderness. They were disobedient, insincere, bent on backsliding and in a constant state of rebellion.

The world is becoming a wilderness for the truth of God's Word. God will send a famine, not one of bread or thirst, but one of hearing the words of the Lord [Amos 8:11–12]. God looks down and sees what we are doing. He reads our thoughts and sees what we do with those thoughts. The Israelites knew the love of God. They had witnessed His miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet they treated God like an enemy and chose not to follow His ways. Because of their refusal to follow God's ways, He did not allow them to enter the Promise Land. They grieved God.

Like the children of Israel, we need to repent. Repentance is not a time for emotions but a time to have a change of heart and mind—a change of direction and goals. God is calling. Hear His voice and obey His law. Listen to the prompting of His Spirit. Hear and heed, hear and yield.

If you hear and obey, He will give you His rest. We know that in the end we shall have the victory in our Lord Jesus Christ.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 94
ACTS 13

QUESTION

Are you willing to make a stand boldly for our Lord?

17 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 96

LESSON

The manner of our worship

VERSE 9

*O worship the LORD in the
beauty of holiness: fear
before him, all the earth.*

The phrase “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” is also found in 1 Chronicles 16:29 and Psalm 29:2. In worship, believers are to “give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come before Him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before Him, all the earth”.

It is good to have a beautiful church building to conduct worship services. There is also nothing wrong in putting on our best clothes when we go to church on Sundays, but these things are not essential. The early Christians had no fine edifices to worship God. The thought of the holiness and glory of God should prompt us to give the best for His house and His day.

Spurgeon said: “Beauty of architecture and apparel He does not regard; moral and spiritual beauty is that in which His soul delighteth. Worship must not be rendered to God in a slovenly, sinful, superficial manner; we must be reverent, sincere, earnest and pure in heart both in our prayers and praises.”

“Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” means when we come to His house, we should consciously set our minds and hearts in adoration of Him. It is also possible to be in God’s house but to be half asleep. We must focus our minds during worship and pour out our hearts to God when we sing and pray. We are to delight ourselves in the Lord, His greatness and His goodness, and remind ourselves that we are unworthy of the least of His mercies.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 95
ACTS 14

THOUGHT

Holiness is the antithesis of sin, and the beauty of holiness is in direct contrast from the ugliness of sin. – AW Pink

BIBLE LESSON*Psalms 97***LESSON****Clouds and darkness****VERSE 2**

*Clouds and darkness
are round about him:
righteousness and
judgement are the
habitation of his throne.*

The Psalmist was describing God's unsearchableness when he said, "Clouds and darkness are round about him", and "He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies" [v. 2a; Psalm 18:11]

In using the symbols of "clouds" and "darkness", the Psalmist was giving us a picture of the formidable majesty of God. On Mount Sinai, "Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was" [Exodus 20:21]. The Lord appeared "in the cloud upon the mercy seat" [Leviticus 16:2c]. "The priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord" [1 Kings 8:11]. God is so holy that no man can see Him face-to-face. "He said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" [Exodus 33:20].

Clouds can also be emblems of obscurity, darkness or fear. A cloudy sky awes us more than a clear sky. Darkness produces a peculiar effect on our senses. Darkness is also a symbol of misery and adversity [Isaiah 8:22], of ignorance [Matthew 6:23] and of death [Job 10:21]. When Christ Jesus was hanging on the cross, "there was a darkness over all the earth" [Luke 23:44]. Darkness will again surround the world when Christ comes again as a judge because the sun, moon and stars will stop shining [Matthew 24:29].

Take heed. Believers are given a stern warning of having "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" [Ephesians 5:11].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 96
ACTS 15

THOUGHT

The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble. – Proverbs 4:19

BIBLE LESSON*Psalms 98–99***LESSON****Vengeance against our misdeeds****PSALM 99:8**

*Thou answeredst them,
O LORD our God: thou
wast a God that forgavest
them, though thou
tookest vengeance of their
inventions.*

Psalm 99:8 refers to the Israelites who were spared through the intercession of Moses, Aaron and Samuel. However, God showed His displeasure at their misdeeds, chastened them severely for their transgressions but did not destroy them.

God forgives sinners but He slays their sins. God continues to love His children but He does not condone their wrongdoings. Spurgeon said: “To forgive sin and at the same time express abhorrence of it is the peculiar glory of God.” We are children of God and we must expect the rod of paternal discipline to be upon us if we don’t walk closely with Him. However, we are not shut out from our Heavenly Father. After His discipline, we will savour a sweet and abiding sense of forgiveness, notwithstanding “our inventions” or our wayward activities.

“Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.” It is not a light punishment but a “vengeance”. God takes on our “inventions” to show that He hates every wicked thought. “A gardener hates a weed the more for being in the bed with the most precious flowers,” said Stephen Charnock.

Let us learn a lesson from King David when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah. God spared his life. But the Prophet Nathan pronounced severe afflictions upon David, which included “the sword shall never depart from thine house”, “I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house”, and “the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die” [2 Samuel 12:10–14].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 97
ACTS 16

THOUGHT

Unlike men, God never takes vengeance based on impure motives.

20 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 100–101

LESSON

Giving thanks to the Lord

PSALM 100:4

*Enter into his gates with
thanksgiving, and into
his courts with praise: be
thankful unto him, and
bless his name.*

Psalm 100 talks about entering God's presence with thanksgiving and praise. All the inhabitants of the earth are invited to sing praises to God for His loving-kindness and faithfulness. Other than Psalm 23, no other psalm is more often read than Psalm 100, for it is so filled with joy of worshipping the Lord. There is not a single mournful word found in it!

Verse 4 reminds us of God's goodness and dependability, and that we are to worship Him with praise and thanksgiving. His grace and mercy allow us to enter His gates and His courts in public worship. So let us thank and praise Him. Let us praise Him in our hearts as well as with our lips. Charles Spurgeon said: "So long as we are receivers of mercy, we must be givers of thanks. Whatever He does, be sure that you bless Him for it; bless Him when He takes away as well as when He gives; bless Him as long as you live, under all circumstances."

Worship is about thanking and praising the Lord's faithfulness and goodness to us. Do we need to examine our attitude towards worship? Do we willingly and joyfully come into God's presence? Do we worship Him for all He has been, all He is and all He will be? The Lord is patient in waiting for us to enter His gates and courts to enjoy His presence.

Let us therefore be grateful to Him for all things that happen in our lives and at all times.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 98
ACTS 17

THOUGHT

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. – Psalm 100:3

21 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 102

LESSON

God changes not.

VERSE 27

*But thou art the same, and
thy years shall have no end.*

Psalm 102 is one of the saddest of the seven penitential psalms. The Psalmist is weak and in trouble. He wrote about his pain and sorrow, persecution and faint-heartedness. However, he ended on a sublime note of confidence in God's eternal constancy in His dealings with men.

The Psalmist said, "Thou art the same." This means that everything else changes but God is immutable. The Lord Himself affirms, "For I am the Lord, I change not" [Malachi 3:6a]. We want to claim the assurance contained in Psalm 102 that even though all things and people are changing, perishing or dying, our Lord Jesus said: "Because I live, ye shall live also" [John 14:19b]. Therefore, our future is secure as we put our trust in Him.

John Gill has these words of encouragement for believers: "God is immutable in His nature and perfections; in His love and affections to His people; in His power to protect and keep them; in His wisdom to guide and direct them; in His righteousness to clothe them; in His blood to cleanse them, and speak peace and pardon to them; in His fullness to supply them, and in His intercession for them."

It is indeed comforting to know that "Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and today, and forever" [Hebrews 13:8]. Who else can we entrust our eternal well-being to other than Him Who is not only our God but also One Who does not and cannot change? Our eternal destiny is in no better hands.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 99
ACTS 18

THOUGHT

A god who changes is not worth knowing and believing, as we would not be able to trust Him.

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 103***LESSON****Why worship God?****VERSE 17**

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

There is only one kind of people in this world—sinners. The Bible tells us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Ultimately, they all go to one place [Ecclesiastes 3:20]. No matter how powerful, rich and successful you are, Psalm 103 has bad news for you. You are like a flower of the field that flourishes, “for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more” [v. 16].

There are only two kinds of sinners in this world—those who fear God and those who say in their heart that “there is no God”. If you belong to the first kind, Psalm 103 has good news for you. God will pardon you and show His mercy towards you forever [v. 17], and He will impute His righteousness to you. Your only response is to thank Him, worship Him, and love Him with all your heart, all your soul and all your might.

You also want to read this psalm over and over again because it so beautifully describes what a wonderful Saviour we have. You don't want to forget all His benefits. You will acknowledge that only He is worthy to receive glory and honour and power.

But if you are the second kind, be forewarned. God will not always chide. Neither will He keep His anger forever [v. 9].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 100
ACTS 19

THOUGHT

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. – Isaiah 55:6

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 104***LESSON****How great Thou art!****VERSE 1**

*Bless the LORD, O my soul.
O LORD my God, thou art
very great; thou art clothed
with honour and majesty.*

The Psalmist opens with a declaration that our God is very great and is worthy of our praise and worship. In the next 30 verses or so, he describes in beautiful language God's marvellous works of creation. Creation reveals God's wisdom and contains His wealth [v. 24]. It makes man's work possible.

God did not stop at creating. He mercifully sustains it. The entire creation rejoiced in its Creator, and God Himself rejoiced in His creation [v. 31]. In the light of this revelation, would you not want to sing unto the Lord as long as you live and praise Him while you have your being [v. 33]?

Sadly, the majority of humankind wilfully chooses to reject God, conjuring foolish theories of how life "evolved" from lifeless chemicals. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" [Romans 1:22]. Instead of worshipping their Creator, they worship the works of their own hands. But God will not be mocked. One day He will judge this earth and unrepentant sinners will be "consumed out of the earth" and become "no more" [v. 35]. In fact, the Bible teaches that in the day of judgement, anyone who has not been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ will be cast into the lake of fire.

We must follow the Psalmist's example and worship and praise our great God. But we must also pray for our unbelieving friends and loved ones and warn them of the terrible consequences of rejecting Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 101
ACTS 20

THOUGHT

And without him was not any thing made that was made. – John 1:3b

24 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 105

LESSON

A God Who remembers

VERSE 42

For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.

This psalm tells of the faithfulness of God to Israel from the time of His initial covenant with them through Abraham to their entry into the Promised Land. It rehearses all the key events in Israel's history and how God redeemed, delivered, protected and provided for His people.

It was all part of God's plan. He chose Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jacob's sons to accomplish His great purpose for this world. And He used His servants like Joseph, Moses and Joshua to carry out His plan. He did this because He is a God Who remembers His promises [v. 42].

We thank God that He is a covenant-keeping God Who does not take His promises lightly as we sinful humans do. We can be assured—like the thief who was crucified with the Lord Jesus—that after we die, we will be with Him in paradise. When the time comes for Him to judge this sinful earth, we need not fear because, just as He remembered the animals in Noah's ark during the global flood [Genesis 8:1], He will take care of us. Meanwhile, we can take comfort that He has gone to prepare a place for us and someday He will come again to receive us.

In response, we should heed the Psalmist's call to give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name and make known His deeds to the people around us. Let us sing psalms unto Him. Let us glory in His holy name. Let our hearts rejoice and remember His wondrous works.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 102
ACTS 21

PRAYER

Lord, remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom. – Luke 23:42

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 106***LESSON****A forgetful people****VERSE 13**

*They soon forget his works;
they waited not for his
counsel.*

While Psalm 105 is a recollection of the faithfulness of God and the numerous occasions when He remembered His people Israel, Psalm 106 is a confession of the sins of the Israelites and the many times they forgot God's goodness towards them. "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly" [v. 6]. This summarises the confession.

Among their many sins were their ingratitude, their forgetfulness, their rebellion, their self-will, their immorality, their provocation, their rejection of God's leadership, their disbelief and idolatry, their faithlessness, and their outright disobedience of God's instructions and warnings. They provoked God to anger repeatedly. Although He had to discipline them, He did not utterly cast them out. Instead, over and over again, He forgave them and saved them from destruction.

Yet every time, they quickly forgot His mercy. It is only because of God's longsuffering and His faithfulness to His promises to Abraham that the people were not destroyed. It is no wonder that the Psalmist began and ended his psalm with a loud Hallelujah, "Praise ye the Lord". Like Daniel in his prayer [Daniel 9], the Psalmist prostrated himself before God and pleaded for His mercy and salvation.

The question every reader should ask is: Are we much better than the Israelites? The answer should be obvious. We must therefore heed our Lord's instruction and warning; "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" [Luke 13:5]. Thank God that He is a merciful God Who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust [Psalm 103:14].

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 103
ACTS 22**

PRAYER

O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake. – Daniel 9:19

26 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 107

LESSON

Lead me to Calvary.

VERSE 8

*Oh that men would praise
the LORD for his goodness,
and for his wonderful works
to the children of men!*

This psalm teaches God's people not to take His mercy for granted. It presents four pictures of how God saved His people Israel. He rescued them when they were lost in the wilderness. They were hungry and weak, and God fed them and led them to safety [v. 4–9]. He set them free from the prison that they deserved to be in because of their rebellion [v. 10–16]. He healed them when they were seriously ill because of their own foolish behaviour [v. 17–22]. He delivered from a violent storm at sea when they simply had nowhere else to turn to for help [v. 23–32].

But were they thankful? “Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” the Psalmist declared repeatedly.

From these pictures we learn two important truths. Sinners are prone to wander away from the living God. Yet God is ever merciful and restores His people when they come to Him in repentance. While He can make the rivers bone dry and cause bubbling springs to evaporate, He can also send the rain to turn the wilderness into a garden. Only God can make the cattle multiply. We eat and are full, but do we take the time to thank God for our daily bread?

The redeemed of God must be wise and understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. We must declare to the world that our God is good, and that His mercy endures forever.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 104:1–11
ACTS 23

CHORUS

**Lest I forget Gethsemane, Lest I forget Thine
agony; Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary.**

27 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalm 108

LESSON

Grateful praise

VERSE 1

*O God, my heart is fixed;
I will sing and give praise,
even with my glory.*

This psalm is composed of portions from two other psalms, Psalm 57:7–11 and Psalm 60:5–12. The Psalmist is focused and determined to praise the Lord for His unceasing love and faithfulness. In confident faith, David praised God for anticipated victory over his personal enemies and that of Israel. He could not keep quiet as he recalled the protecting hand of the Lord and awoke early to greet the dawn with songs of thanksgiving to declare God's mercy and grace.

David acknowledged the favour and grace of the Lord for strength and success “for vain is the help of man” [v. 12–13]. He was assured of the prospect of victory even as he went out to battle. The Apostle Paul likewise recognised that “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” [Philippians 4:13]. Both of them have learnt to rely on God's help only as they realised that “my help cometh from the Lord” [Psalm 121:2a].

“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy” [Psalm 107:2]. David is ever mindful of the Lord's protection and deliverance in every situation and he made it known that “It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” [Lamentations 3:22].

David trusted and praised God in times of adversity as he fixed his heart on God.

Stayed upon Jehovah,
Hearts are fully blest;
Finding, as He promised,
Perfect peace and rest.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 104:12–35
ACTS 24

MEMORISE

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee. – Isaiah 26:3

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 109***LESSON****A just end****VERSE 20**

*Let this be the reward of
mine adversaries from the
LORD, and of them that
speak evil against my soul.*

This psalm tops the list of all the imprecatory psalms. An imprecatory psalm is one that calls upon God to punish and curse evildoers. The Psalmist was falsely accused, slandered and suffered much from the hands of his enemies. In righteous anger, he cried out to God to deliver him from his extreme affliction. There was no other way out for him but to pour out his troubles to God.

David asked the Lord to vindicate him so that his enemies would know that it was an act of divine intervention. Read this psalm again and feel the deep despair of the Psalmist who received evil for good. He could not take it anymore and turned to God for vengeance. He believed that the righteous God would judge the wicked and justice would prevail.

It seems that king David wanted a tit-for-tat. How do you reconcile this psalm with the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament to turn the other cheek and forgive your enemies? It is believed that these imprecations are predictions of future judgement on God's enemies, and for the purpose of vindicating God's name. As God's anointed, David was His representative to pronounce these severe judgements.

Our Lord Jesus experienced the same afflictions as the Psalmist. He endured to the end—the suffering on the Cross to save us from our sins—but the Day of Judgement will come for His enemies and those who reject Him as Saviour. The best way to treat your enemy is to leave him to the Lord.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 105:1-19
ACTS 25**

THOUGHT

**Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. –
Romans 12:19b**

BIBLE LESSON*Psalms 110–111***LESSON****True wisdom****PSALM 111:10**

*The fear of the LORD is
the beginning of wisdom:
a good understanding
have all they that do his
commandments: his praise
endureth for ever.*

TTrue wisdom is to fear God, that is, to have reverence for Him. Such reverence is the very foundation of wisdom. It is only reasonable that we should fear Him Whose name is reverend and holy [Psalm 111:9]. This is holy, reverential fear or respect for God our Creator. It is not the fear of terror of a slave for his master. It is to stand in awe of God and have the wisdom and understanding not to offend Him.

This fear of offending God will lead us to do that which is right, to obey His Word. It springs from love and a sincere desire to do His commandments. This fear will lead to repentance and faith in Christ and a yearning to obey His will. This is the greatest wisdom of all—to know and honour God. To know God is to walk right before Him in holy reverence.

“Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” [Ecclesiastes 12:13b]. Our purpose in life is to serve and worship God. This is the surest way to receive divine blessings and success. Understanding the laws of God will lead to the blessed hope of salvation [2 Timothy 3:15] and the doctrine of Christ [John 7:17]. It is wise of the created being to praise the Almighty God.

The God-fearing man is truly wise to revere God, the source of knowledge [Proverbs 9:10], as his mind is influenced by the fear and love of God.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 105:20–45
ACTS 26**

THOUGHT

And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding. – Job 28:28

BIBLE LESSON*Psalm 112***LESSON****The blessed man****VERSE 1**

*Praise ye the LORD.
Blessed is the man that
feareth the LORD, that
delighteth greatly in his
commandments.*

This is a continuation of the preceding psalm, which is about a righteous God. Psalm 112 is about the man whom God makes righteous. This psalm is an exposition of Psalm 111:10, presenting the happiness of those who fear and obey God, and contrasting the miserable state of the ungodly. The blessed or righteous man takes great delight in the laws of God. He not only studies the Word of God but also rejoices to diligently observe and do it.

This psalm talks about the character, conduct, usefulness and happiness of a good man—that is, the blessing of the righteous. And we are reminded that the source of all this goodness is the Lord, Whose name is to be praised. Blessed is the man who fears God and not men. This godly fear springs from a heart that is close to God and delights greatly in His commandments. Therefore, he finds joy and pleasure in doing the will of God. “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day” [Psalm 119:97].

When you fear the Lord, you have freedom from fear. The blessed man trusts in the Lord, knowing that nothing will happen to him apart from God’s will. He is confident and rests in the comfort of Romans 8:35: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”

Read Joshua 1:8 for Moses’ parting words to his disciple to learn of good success.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 106:1–22
ACTS 27**

THOUGHT**Meditate and memorise Psalm 1.**

31 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 113–114

LESSON

God so great, yet so condescending

PSALM 113:5

*Who is like unto the LORD
our God, who dwelleth on
high,*

God is presented as the Great Almighty Who deserves our praise and worship. Those of us who have been redeemed by His precious blood 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” [1 Peter 2:9]. Every servant of the Lord must praise Him for Who and What He is—so great, yet so condescending.

This psalm is echoed by Hannah’s Song of Praise [1 Samuel 2] and Mary’s Magnificat [Luke 1:48]. Our sovereign and majestic God looks down from heaven with love and compassion on His children. He hearkened unto Hannah’s miserable state of being childless and condescended to visit her with grace and redemption. Mary was highly favoured to be chosen the mother of the Messiah. Other examples: Abraham was blessed to be the father of the Jewish nation, Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles and Peter the first to preach the Gospel to them.

Indeed, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?” [Psalm 8:4]. Man was created in the image of God, ranked a little lower than angels and honoured to have dominion over the earth.

The Psalmist exhorts every nation to praise Him throughout all generations of time. He raised the humble to positions of dignity and honour—for example, Joseph and David.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
PSALM 106:23–48
ACTS 28

THOUGHT

**God is infinitely high and also intimately nigh. –
William McDonald**

