

Sermon Seeds from the Psalms

by

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Psalms Ninety to Ninety-Nine

PSALM NINETY

1. Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.
2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.
3. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.
4. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.
5. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.
6. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
7. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.
8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
9. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.
10. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
11. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.
12. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.
13. Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.
14. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
15. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.
16. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.
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.

This is a hymn which deals with the feebleness of man, the brevity of life, the certainty of death, and the great need for GOD:

(1) The feebleness of man. "**In the morning they are like grass which groweth up . . . in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.**" "**We spend our years as a tale that is told.**" "**So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.**"

(2) The brevity of life. "**The days of our years are threescore years and ten . . . labour . . .**

sorrow . . . soon cut off."

(3) The certainty of death. **"Thou turnest man to destruction . . . thou carriest them away . . . they are as a sleep."**

(4) The great need for GOD. **"O satisfy us early with thy mercy." "Make us glad . . . and let the beauty of The LORD our God be upon us."**

There is sufficient truth in this one Song to save all the world. If men are wise, sane, calm and collected, reasonable and considerate, they would all repent, believe, surrender, and be saved the moment this hymn is read or sung.

PSALM NINETY-ONE

- 1. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**
- 2. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.**
- 3. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.**
- 4. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.**
- 5. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;**
- 6. Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.**
- 7. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.**
- 8. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.**
- 9. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;**
- 10. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.**
- 11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.**
- 12. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.**
- 13. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.**
- 14. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.**
- 15. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.**
- 16. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.**

Next to Psalms 1 and 23 this Song is perhaps the best known, best loved, and most used in all the Psalter. It contains some of the finest and fullest promises to be found anywhere in the Holy Bible.

Applied by the HOLY SPIRIT to the hearts of saints for centuries, it has been a source of comfort and consolation in times of sore need and deep distress. It should not, however, be taken at random and applied to the Church and made to fit into the experiences of all the saints of this dispensation. Much damage has been done to the faith, trust, and confidence of not a few saints by indiscriminately picking out a few precious promises and claiming the fulfilment of them,

only to find that they did not work.

Take for instance:

- (1) **"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling,"**
- (2) **"With long life will I satisfy him."**

Some of the choicest saints of this Church age have died by plague and pestilence of foreign fields. Their lonely graves in India, China, and Africa, as well as in the homeland, give eloquent testimony that they not only died of dreadful diseases, but that they died while still young. Picking out promises promiscuously does not always help the faith of the holy.

This 91st Psalm. has special reference first to CHRIST and then to restored Israel in coming days. The HOLY SPIRIT may apply it to individual hearts as He pleases and when He applies it, it always works.

Promises like the above in the Old Testament, as well as **"If ye shall ask any thing . . . I will do it"** in the New Testament, are not for promiscuous claiming and handling.

John Newton thinks, that neither the casting of lots, the opening of the Bible at a venture, nor the sudden impression of a text, nor freedom in prayer over a matter, nor a dream, furnishes any reliable direction. The Lord rather opens and shuts, throws down the walls of difficulty, or hedges the way with thorns, for those who confidingly seek His guidance by prayer. They know that their concerns are in His hands, and fear to run before He sends, or to delay when He directs an advance.

PSALM NINETY-TWO

- 1. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:**
- 2. To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,**
- 3. Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.**
- 4. For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.**
- 5. O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.**
- 6. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.**
- 7. When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:**
- 8. But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.**
- 9. For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.**
- 10. But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.**
- 11. Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me.**
- 12. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.**

- 13. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.**
- 14. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;**
- 15. To shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.**

The key to this delightful and dramatic Psalm is found in the first eight words of the Psalm. **"It is a good thing to give thanks."**

We are enjoined to give thanks:

- (1) for his lovingkindness,
- (2) his faithfulness,
- (3) his greatness,
- (4) his holiness.

"The Lord is upright . . . there is no unrighteousness in him."

Thousands of sermons have been preached from the twelfth stanza of this stirring song. **"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."**

It is not my strength that grows, so much as GOD's strength in me, which is given more abundantly as the days roll. It is so given on one condition. If my faith has laid hold of the infinite, the exhaustless, the immortal energy of GOD, unless there is something fearfully wrong about me, I shall be getting purer, nobler, wiser, more observant of His will; gentler, like CHRIST; every way fitter for His service, and for larger service, as the days increase.

- Alexander Maclaren

Grow as a palm-tree on GOD's Mount Zion; howbeit shaken with winds, yet the root is fast. -
Rutherford

The vendors of flowers in the streets of London are wont to commend them to customers by crying: "All a blowing and a growing." It would be no small praise to Christians if we could say as much for them.

- C. H. Spurgeon

PSALM NINETY-THREE

- 1. The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.**
- 2. Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.**
- 3. The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.**
- 4. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.**
- 5. Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.**

There are three main topics set forth in this short Song:

- (1) The glorious reign of CHRIST as King.
- (2) The infallibility of the Holy Bible.
- (3) The holiness which becometh the worship of CHRIST.

1. **"The LORD reigneth."**

When Pompey's adherents deserted him, and went over to Caesar, or were taken prisoners and brought to Caesar, he loaded them with favors and honors. He declared that it was his highest pleasure to save his enemies who had fought against him. Such clemency and favor is that which CHRIST shows even to those who have opposed Him most.

2. **"Thy testimonies are very sure."**

An old man once said, "For a long period, I puzzled myself about the difficulties of Scriptures, until at last I came to the resolution, that reading the Bible was like eating fish. When I find a difficulty, I lay it aside, and call it a bone. Why should I choke over the bone when there is so much nutritious meat for me? Some day, perhaps, I may find that even the bone may afford me nourishment."

3. **"Holiness becometh thine house... for ever."**

Without holiness, there can be no such Heaven as the New Testament reveals.

- There may be scenery of surpassing grandeur - mountains, woods, rivers, and skies most charming; but they do not make a Heaven, else a Heaven might be found in Wales or Cumberland.
- There may be a capital full of palaces and temples; but they do not make a Heaven, else a Heaven might have been found in Delhi.
- There may be buildings of marble and precious stones; but they do not make a Heaven, else a Heaven might have been in Rome or Venice.
- There may be health and ease and luxury and festivities; but they do not make a Heaven, else one would have been met with in Belshazzar's halls.
- There may be education, philosophy, poetry, literature, art; but that will not make a Heaven, else the Greeks would have had one in Athens, in the grove and in the porch.

Holiness is that without which no Heaven could exist.

- J. Stoughton

PSALM NINETY-FOUR

1. **O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.**
2. **Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.**
3. **Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?**

4. How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?
5. They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.
6. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.
7. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.
8. Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?
9. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?
10. He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?
11. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.
12. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law;
13. That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.
14. For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.
15. But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.
16. Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?
17. Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.
18. When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.
19. In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.
20. Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?
21. They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.
22. But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.
23. And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off.

There are six special warnings against specific sins set forth in this worthy Song.

1. Warning against pride. "**O Lord God... shew thyself . . . render a reward to the proud.**"
2. Warning against evil speaking. "**Lord, how long . . . how long shall they... speak hard things.**"
3. Warning against haughtiness. "**How long shall... the workers of iniquity boast themselves.**"
4. Warning against injustice. "**They break in pieces thy people . . . they slay the widow . . . and murder.**"
5. Warning against wilfulness. "**The LORD shall not see.**"
6. Warning against unrighteous government. "**Which frameth mischief by a law.**"

Framing "**mischief by a law**" is an old practice. Crooked politics in State and Church has almost ruined the whole world. Men seem bent upon their own way even though it means the death and doom of the nation and the Church. Government is often carried on for purely personal gain and preferment. Even the deadly and destructive business of war has become an international racket. Framing "**mischief by a law.**"

PSALM NINETY-FIVE

1. **O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.**
2. **Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.**
3. **For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.**
4. **In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.**
5. **The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.**
6. **O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.**
7. **For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,**
8. **Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:**
9. **When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.**
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:**
11. **Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.**

The Psalms were the hymns of worship for the people of GOD in Old Testament times, and they shall constitute the Song book of restored Israel in coming days. The 95th Psalm deals with divine worship.

True and acceptable worship includes:

- (1) the singing of sacred songs,
- (2) the making of a joyful noise to The Lord,
- (3) kneeling before The Lord our maker.

1. Singing

"God . . . who giveth songs in the night." (Job 35:10)

We make our songs in the day of our gladness,
 When life is all laughter and joy and delight,
 When never a shadow has clouded our sunshine;
 But GOD giveth songs in the night.

2. Shouting

"The joy of The Lord is your strength," my brother.

Nothing else is. No vehement resolutions, no sense of your own sinfulness, nor even contrite remembrance of your own failures, ever made a man strong yet. It made him weak that he might become strong; and when it had done that, it had done its work. For strength there must be hope, for strength there must be joy.

- Alexander Maclaren

3. Submission

A fond father, expecting the death of an infant son, was exhorted to submit to the divine will. He said, "I cannot give him up. I pray GOD to spare this child to me, whatever may be the consequences." The child was spared, but was a constant grief to his father, became a hardened wretch, and paid the penalty of his crimes upon the gallows.

PSALM NINETY-SIX

1. **O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.**
2. **Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.**
3. **Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.**
4. **For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.**
5. **For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.**
6. **Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**
7. **Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.**
8. **Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.**
9. **O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.**
10. **Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.**
11. **Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.**
12. **Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice**
13. **Before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.**

The prayer which was taught the disciples by CHRIST includes the words "**thy kingdom come.**"

There are two kingdoms mentioned in that prayer. The first is set forth in the phrase "**thy kingdom come,**" while the second is expressed in the closing lines, "**thine is the kingdom.**"

The present kingdom of GOD is spiritual. It is "**righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**"

The future kingdom is to be earthly with its centre in Jerusalem and with CHRIST as the King.

The 96th psalm like many other psalms is prophetic. Only when CHRIST returns will all the earth sing "**a new song**" (verse 1). Only when CHRIST returns will all the earth "**worship The Lord in the beauty of holiness**" (verse 9).

This entire Song awaits the return of David's greater Son.

PSALM NINETY-SEVEN

1. **The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.**
2. **Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.**

3. **A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.**
4. **His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.**
5. **The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.**
6. **The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.**
7. **Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.**
8. **Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O Lord.**
9. **For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.**
10. **Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.**
11. **Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.**
12. **Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.**

A Psalm of CHRIST the King

The 97th Psalm opens with the ominous announcement that "**The Lord reigneth.**"

The previous song (Psalm 96) closed with His coming, and this song opens with Him reigning. The coming and reign of CHRIST is the hope of the Church and the only hope of mankind. All other governments have failed. Man is a failure. The carnal heart is not subject to law. Carnality cannot be imprisoned, crucified, or incarcerated. It is not subject even to the law of GOD, and indeed cannot be subjected. All hope for mankind, the Church, the animals, and all nature centres around the second coming of CHRIST. The crying need of our own day is for a righteous King and just Judge. Such a King and Judge is coming.

In the meantime, the saints now are exhorted:

- (1) to "**hate evil,**"
- (2) "**rejoice,**"
- (3) "**give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.**"

PSALM NINETY-EIGHT

1. O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.
2. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
3. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
4. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.
5. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.
6. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.
7. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
8. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together

9. Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

A Psalm of the Second Coming of CHRIST

Psalms 93-98 are all Kingdom, Second Coming, and Millennium Songs.

The Old Testament sets forth CHRIST as both a suffering Messiah and a reigning Lord. The Jews misunderstood the part to be played by the sufferings and the Cross of CHRIST, and the Church has similarly missed the importance of His coming to rule and reign. CHRIST is yet to sit upon the throne of His father David and rule in righteousness and peace.

As the city of Washington feted and feasted General Eisenhower upon his return from Europe because of the great victory over Germany, so here the Psalmist celebrates the victory of CHRIST over sin and Satan.

- (1) **"He hath done marvelous things."**
- (2) **"His right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory"** (versel).
- (3) **"The Lord hath made known his salvation"** (verse 2).
- (4) **"With righteousness shall he judge the world"** (verse 9).

PSALM NINETY-NINE

- 1. The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the Cherubims; let the earth be moved.**
- 2. The Lord is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people.**
- 3. Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.**
- 4. The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.**
- 5. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.**
- 6. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.**
- 7. He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them.**
- 8. Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.**
- 9. Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy.**

In this hymn of only nine stanzas there are innumerable themes for study, prayer, research, and meditation.

- (1) CHRIST the king (verse 1), **"The Lord reigneth."**
- (2) The greatness and glory of CHRIST (verse 2), **"The Lord is great in Zion."**
- (3) The holiness of CHRIST (verse 3), **"Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy."**
- (4) The justice and righteousness of CHRIST (verse 4), **"The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity."**

(5) The salvation of CHRIST (verse 5), "**Exalt ye The LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.**"

(6) The compassion of CHRIST (verse 6), "**Moses, and Aaron . . . and Samuel . . . called upon The LORD, and he answered them.**"

(7) The mercy of CHRIST (verse 8), "**Thou . . . forgavest them.**"

Three times in these nine verses the holiness of CHRIST is emphasized. "**Thy great and terrible name; for it is holy**" (verse 3). "**He is holy**" (verse 5). "**The LORD our God is holy**" (verse 9).

Twice in this brief song His justice and righteousness are mentioned. "**Thou executest judgment and righteousness**" (verse 4), and "**Thou answeredst . . . though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.**"

We need, at all times, to keep the holiness, mercy, and righteousness of CHRIST in true focus and perspective in order to avoid a one-sided view of CHRIST. GOD is love, but strictly CHRIST is merciful, kind, and compassionate, but He is also strictly righteous, just, and holy.

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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