

# **GRACE & TRUTH**

**MAGAZINE**

- ***Psalms Of Creation***
- ***Marriage Glue***
- ***Fatherhood And Sonship***



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# GRACE & TRUTH

MAGAZINE

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## “When I Consider Your Heavens”

I remember during my high school days having an interest in how the world came to be. During that time the Sunday school class I was in studied creation from a scientific viewpoint, using the Bible and an accompanying, accurate book on the topic. There are many such resources available to help individuals as well as pastors and teachers to understand the truth of creation and present it to others factually – a valuable endeavor as the subject is so horribly attacked by many today.

If we haven't read our Bibles very carefully, we may think that Genesis 1-2 is the only place that talks about creation. But there are many more passages on that subject. Personally, I like the chapters near the end of Job when the LORD challenges him as to “where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, who set its measurements?” (Job 38:4-5 NASB).

This particular issue of the magazine focuses on the Psalms that speak of creation. Like Job, we will see the greatness of God. Among other things, we will see the beauty of His grace, the char-

acter of His person, the love of His heart and the praise He is due. As we consider creation, like the writers of Psalms were, our hearts will be drawn to Him.

Believing the biblical account of creation is critical, for we recognize that as a foundation truth. God creating all that has been made affects everything. We see how small and sinful we are, but we also see a Savior who loves us so greatly. Moral values then have significance for we are responsible to our Creator. Marriage, fatherhood and family relationships become important, having been established by God. People, having been intimately fashioned by God Himself, are precious.

We hope the articles of this edition of the magazine will be used of the Lord to bless and strengthen you in this day when what is false and wrong is promoted and what is true and right is so strongly opposed. Men of the world want nothing to do with God. We pray that you will, instead, faithfully follow the Lord, looking in hope for His appearing.

*Paul*

# We Love To Sing

We love to sing Thy praises, O Jesus Christ the Lord;  
It is our new-born gladness Thy goodness to record:  
The one absorbing treasure that fills our heart and eye  
Is love that came to suffer, for enemies to die.

Oh, love beyond all telling, beyond all ken or thought,  
Which Thou, O blessed Saviour, to us from heaven hast  
brought!

In Thee we see united both God and man in One;  
Hence power and love unmeasured combined in Thee  
are shown.

The power of the Creator gives glory to Thy name;  
The love of the Redeemer enhances all Thy fame:  
Creator and Redeemer, Almighty Saviour Lord,  
The power and love that saved us for ever be adored.

—Anonymous

# Thy Praises

**T**he Psalms are the poetry book of God. These ancient gems express many aspects of the feelings and desires of the heart of mankind toward the Almighty, including comfort, guidance and praise. The Psalms that especially focus on our great God's creative works may instill in us the tremendous awe that we ought to feel toward Him for His wonderful creation. Let's look at these Psalms!

# Psalms of Creation

by Tom Steere

## Psalm 8:

### The Awesomeness Of His Glory

On the fourth day of creation God set the sun, moon and stars in the sky for signs, seasons, days and years; and to give light upon the earth (Gen. 1:14-19). Our modern, artificial lighting keeps many of us from seeing the full splendor of the night sky, especially around cities. But once we experience the glory of the star-lit sky, the words of the psalmist immediately hit home and we agree as he asks, "What is man?" (Ps. 8:4 KJV). Furthermore, the more we explore the heavens with our telescopes and probes, the more wonders we discover. These views of the glory of the heavens are glimpses of His glory, which is far above the heavens. Hebrews 2:6-9 interprets this psalm for us: The full sight of God's glory is seen in Jesus (Eph. 4:10; Heb. 1:1-2, 2:6-9).

In the inscription "To the Chief Musician upon Gittith" we recognize Jesus Himself, for *Gittith* comes from the same root word as "wine press." Jesus alone endured being trodden down under the wrath of God against sin as He suffered on the cross. Therefore He alone has the authority to tread the wine press of God's vengeance against unrepentant man, which He will do in a coming day (Isa. 63:3). He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death and is now exalted and given a name above every name (Phil. 2:5-11). "How excellent is Thy name in all the earth!" (Ps. 8:9), says David. Truly, quiet reflection on the glory of the heavens should cause us to glorify Him who is "made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). What are we in comparison to His majesty and glory? The Lord applied this psalm at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem: if those children had not praised

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Him, the stones would have immediately cried out (Mt. 21:15-16; Lk. 19:40). He is Lord of all!

## Psalm 19:

### The Awesomeness Of His Witness

While Psalm 8 is a psalm for the nighttime, Psalm 19 is one for day-break – when the sun outshines all other stars as it flashes over the horizon. The shining heavens provide a tent for the true light of the world – the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2). The Lord Jesus Christ will one day be, like the blazing sun, a Bridegroom coming in His strength. The sun's rising, day after day, reminds us of the coming of Him from whom nothing is hidden. "Their line" – that is the message that the heavens proclaim by their orderly and unstoppable motion, beauty and expansiveness – reaches even to the end of the world, showing us that God desires for all people everywhere to see His glory. This line may even include a message written in the constellations.<sup>1</sup>

God has His witnesses in every place, so man is without excuse. His first witness is creation: "There is no speech nor language where [its] voice is not heard" (Ps. 19:3). The second witness is the law (v.7), converting, or causing repentance in, the soul. God's third witness in this psalm is preaching: "Let the words of my mouth and the medi-

tation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight" (v.14). Romans 10 contains these three witnesses as well, in the order of preaching first, then creation and finally the law. Preaching the good tidings of salvation by grace through faith is God's most efficient witness. The law may bring conviction and repentance, and creation may bring wonder and awe, but gospel preaching brings these all together for it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). Preaching may be weak and despised in the world's sight, but we promote it since that is how multitudes have been saved.

## Psalm 29:

### The Awesomeness Of His Power

While Psalms 8 and 19 present the quietness of the evening and morning, Psalm 29 displays power – as lightning flashes and thunder peals making us shudder to our very bones. Oh, that we would let the terror of the Lord give us God's own concern for the souls of men! (A preacher once said that true ministers are sons of thunder – as were the disciples James and John.) The voice of God in Christ Jesus is full of majesty, such that even the jealous people of Nazareth marveled at the gracious words that came from His mouth (Lk. 4:22)! We have God's works



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and words joined in Psalm 29.

Who are the mighty ones in the first verse if not His worshipers who worship the Father in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:23-24)? He called the people “gods” to whom the Word of God came (10:35) – so let’s use God’s powerful, majestic Word as He uses His voice to stir the many waters of the nations! His voice can break the cedars of pride and bring to a sinner new life, like the skipping of a newborn calf. His Word divides the flames of judgment so they cannot consume a place that has already been burned. The Lord quenched those flames for us by bearing the fire of God’s wrath in His own body. Can we not use God’s Holy Word to shake up hard-hearted men “in the wilderness,” that the wilderness can be holy (the meaning of Kadesh)? His voice gives life to those who truly hear His message and receive Him, but the stiff-necked will be like the forests laid bare. Oh, to be in that temple of the New Jerusalem where all will be glory! The Lord will give strength to His people – strength to accomplish His will in bringing many sons unto glory.

## Psalm 65:

### The Awesomeness Of His Grace

Psalm 65 comes as a soft rain after

the tempest has passed. What grace is given to a soul made right before Him! This gentle rain of grace produces praise to God – praise that is willing to wait on His moving. If all of nature is attentive to His moving, how much more then should we be?

What is praise to God? It is a sacrifice that He provides (Jer. 33:11; Heb. 13:15). “I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, says the LORD; and I will heal him” (Isa. 57:19). Therefore no flesh should glory in His presence when we offer praise to Him. He creates our praise and, in turn, we are satisfied: “A man’s belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled” (Prov. 18:20). Our source is the Word of God for we live not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Lk. 4:4). And our praise must align with His Word. Our blessings come, as this psalm indicates, in being part of the house of God. There we approach unto Him being satisfied with praise (Ps. 65:4). The watering of the earth and the corn prepared speak of God’s Word and of His Christ – so we should speak accordingly, in grace (Eph. 5:26; Jn. 12:24).

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## Psalm 104:

### The Awesomeness Of His Wisdom

In this psalm all nature brings its tribute of praise to swell the anthem of redemption, for all of creation is waiting for the redemption of those who claim Him as Redeemer. No one here sees Him now, but He is clothed with honor and majesty. Since He dons [wears] light itself He could say, “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3). He is the true light of the world (Jn. 1:9). He gives “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6).

The language of the psalmist may appear metaphorical, but how can one separate the Divine Governor of all heavenly bodies from their movements as if they were on their own? By Him all things consist or hold together, and He appeals to our rational natures for recognition. Sadly, the earth, the nation of Israel and even His own people did not receive Him (Jn. 1:11). But today we can receive Him, honor Him, sing of Him, sing psalms to Him, meditate on Him and bless Him – Hallelujah! How lacking we are if we only recognize Him as a disinterested Creator who has left the scene for everything to find its own way. So it is if we believe this

universe is merely a product of physical forces without acknowledging *His* power and direction.

His rejoicing is “in the habitable part of His earth” (Prov. 8:31). Therefore the waters of the deluge of Noah’s day could not remain over the land. In fact the mountains ascended as the waters descended through the valleys, and those waters can never completely cover the earth again (Ps. 104:8-9). But there’s more! The earth and all living creatures are dependent upon heaven from which the distilled rainwaters come. Water from heaven is infinitely better than water from under the earth for groundwater is full of salts and minerals which eventually choke life. So also are the broken cisterns of religion that men make for themselves. The heavenly waters give drink to every beast – even rebellious mankind whom the Lord desires to tame and dwell among (Job 11:12; Ps. 68:18). His desire is toward man, and the whole creation is for the service of man (Ps. 104:14). Man is thus His crowning creature and the master over all other creatures.

To back up this goodness of God to man, the psalmist recounts other goodness found in nature: the fruitful trees, the moon and sun in their operation, the earth full of God’s riches including the



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animals, birds and innumerable sea creatures, as well as mankind. All are filled with good (Ps. 104:16-28). Truly His works are many and varied! He rejoices in them as seen in that the resources of nature do not grow or exist for themselves, but they minister to the needs of the creatures (Ps. 104:24,31).

We naturally labor in the daytime, unlike the other creatures. Man's toil is often tedious and tiresome because of sin (Gen. 3:23), but satisfaction in the results of our toil is also God's gift to man (Eccl. 3:13). In contrast, God's spiritual gift is that of eternal life through *His work alone* – a work done in the day (Jn. 9:4)! Now, we who trust Him are to walk in the light of His Word (1 Jn. 1:7).

All this emphasizes His full mastery of things. Every one of His works is full of His wisdom (Ps. 104:24). In a future day, if He decides to re-create the now-extinct plants and animals, they will then be created anew (Ps. 104:30).

## Psalm 139:

### The Awesomeness Of His Understanding

With all that has gone before, this psalm reminds us that He knows absolutely everything there is to

know about us. There is no hiding, no muffling of our voices, no escaping from His Spirit; He possesses our lives. “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (Heb. 2:3)? His thoughts of life and not death are toward everyone. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come into life. Our very bodies, formed miraculously in the womb, attest to God's being *for us* – not against us. All His thoughts towards us are precious. How great is the sum of them! If all the possible books were written concerning His wonderful works for man, the world could not contain them.

Alas, man has made himself God's enemy and uses His name in vain. Do we feel for that Name – are we not grieved when we hear our precious Savior's name used as a curse? Perfect hatred would be toward sin and not the sinner for we are but dust ourselves and are capable of such sin. Oh, search us, O God, and drive from us any wicked thing. Lead us in the way everlasting, and we will be in awe of Your glory, witness, power, grace, wisdom and understanding! **GT**

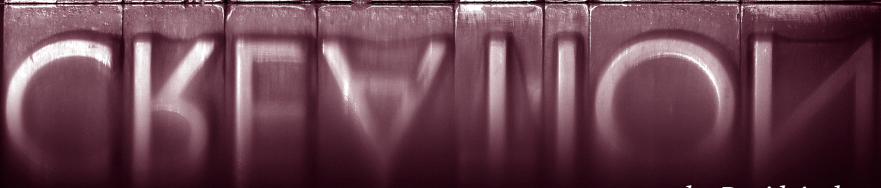
### Endnote:

<sup>1</sup>Seiss, Joseph, *The Gospel in the Stars*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1972.

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*God's creative works may instill in us the tremendous awe that we ought to feel toward Him for His wonderful creation.*

# CREATION



by David Anderson

# IN PSALMS

## Part 1: Creation In The First Book Of Psalms

### Psalm 8:

#### Establishing The Creator's Praise

Psalms worship and glorify God based upon who He is, therefore they often celebrate the fact that He is the sole Creator of all things. The godly Israelite found help “from the LORD who made heaven and earth” (Ps. 121:1-2 ESV). Some psalms also celebrate the creatorial power that will introduce the glorious rule of Messiah, such as Psalm 72. But Psalm 8 provides the basis for all the creation themes found in the five books of Psalms.

Primarily, it celebrates both the glory of creation and man’s (Adam’s!) position in it. Its theme is global praise, so the opening

and closing phrases of the psalm are identical: “Jehovah our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!” (vv.1,9 JND). But verse 1 finishes with “who hast set Thy majesty above the heavens.” “Majesty” suggests the visible presence of Jehovah (1 Chr. 29:11; Ps. 45:3, 93:1), which will be displayed in the physical kingdom of our Lord (2 Pet. 1:16-19). Viewed prophetically, Psalm 8 anticipates the climax of this present creation – the universal reign of Christ as the Son of Man. Where Adam failed in administration and stewardship, Christ will succeed when He is set over all the works of God’s hand – not only in this terrestrial creation where Adam failed, but also over

the astronomical and heavenly creation (compare with Ephesians 1:10,22). Meanwhile, Psalm 8:3 reminds us to take account of the order God has established throughout His creation so praise of the Creator will issue from our lips, as it is appropriate from saints of every dispensation!

## Psalm 19:

### The Incessant Creation Hymn

Look up into the skies, especially at night, and what do you see? Verse 1 says that you will see undeniable evidence of the work of the Creator's hands in the beauty and splendor of the heavens. No one can ever deny the sky's unfailing witness for it "day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge" (v.2 ESV). That is true even though "there is no speech, and there are no words, yet their voice is heard" (v.3 JND). The message is universal – there never has been, nor ever will be, a single member of the human race who was not confronted with the everlasting gospel of creation. "Their measuring line<sup>1</sup> goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (v.4 ESV), yet mankind continues in obstinate denial of the Creator (see Romans 1:19-23).

In verses 4-6 the sun is suddenly brought into focus: "In them He has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat." If the vastness of the galaxies seen in the night skies points to the power and greatness of the Creator, the poetic language of verses 4-6 witnesses to His nature and character. In His goodness He sustains every part of His world through the existence of the sun.

He is its Source and the world's great, impartial Blessor (compare verse 6 with Matthew 5:45)! Psalm 96:11-13 affirms that on a future day the rejoicing of the heavens and the earth will testify of the LORD as the coming Judge of those people who have not responded to creation's testimony. Meanwhile, God has left another, fuller witness of Himself alongside creation – His written Word (Ps. 19:7-13).

## Psalm 24:

### Creation – It's All His!

The LORD is the King of Glory, who has moral, official and personal rights to claim the kingdom. But more fundamentally, He has

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creatorial rights to it (vv.1-2). Creation belongs to Him, the Sovereign One. The earth with all its fullness and populations were designed to give satisfaction and bring glory to their Creator. This will actually happen during the millennium when “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14; Isa. 11:9). God’s ownership of creation is mentioned or implied in other psalms (examples: 2:8, 50:10-11, 60:7-8, 108:8-9, 89:11-12, 100:3) and in repeated descriptions of the LORD as the Maker of heaven, earth and sea (such as: 95:5, 96:5, 115:15, 124:8, 134:3, 146:6).

### Psalm 29:

#### God’s Voice And Creation

Verses 3-9 describe the various physical effects that His voice has on His creation as the reason for all, including the heavenly beings [or, “sons of the mighty one,” v.1 RV], to ascribe glory to Him and to worship Him (vv. 1-2). Verse 3 interprets His voice as thunder, “the God of glory thunders” (ESV), emphasizing the Creator’s power (consider “And God said” in Genesis 1) – as suggested by the repeating of its being “over the waters.” The Creator’s voice is heard seven times in verses 3-9. However,

where there is no fear of Him, He has and will preside over His creation in judgment. “The LORD sat as king at the Flood; yea, the LORD sitteth as King for ever” (v.10 RV; see Psalm 18:7-15).

### Psalm 33:

#### God’s Word And Creation

Psalm 33 also celebrates the power of the LORD’s word. Verses 1-5 call the saints (“the righteous,” ESV) to praise Him because His word is “upright” (v.4). It has such moral power that “the earth is full of [His] steadfast love” (v.5). He made the world and has obligated Himself to it. Other psalms delight in “the steadfast [creatorial] love of the LORD” towards His creation – especially the compassion of the Savior-God towards the forgotten needy and disadvantaged of mankind (see Psalm 65:5-13, 103:13-17, 111:2-5, 145:9,14-17, 146:6-9, 147:8-9).

Secondly, Psalm 33 calls on “the righteous” to praise the LORD because His word is all-powerful as well as upright. “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host” (v.6). He simply used His word to bring the creation into existence (consider Hebrews 11:3). What He commands is immediately accomplished and what He says stands fast (vv.6-9). The expres-

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*The Creator-God continues to provide of His goodness for all of mankind throughout their entire history*

sions “By the word of His mouth” and “by the breath of His mouth” (v.6) underline and interpret the “God said ... and it was so” statements in Genesis 1. The truth Psalm 33:6 states is echoed in Isaiah 40:26: “He ... brings out their host by number, calling them all by name, by the greatness of His might, and because He is strong in power not one is missing” (see Psalm 147:4-5).

Verse 7 gives an interesting insight into Genesis 1:9-10. God is so great and powerful that He gathered the waters of the seas together as a heap [literally, “a wineskin” or “bottle”]. The depths of waters were placed in storehouses or treasuries to be there for His own use, such as at the Flood. According to Psalm 33:9, “He spoke, and it came to be; He commanded, and it stood firm.” But Hebrews 1:3 also says that the Creator (God’s Son) continually upholds the entire creation by the word of His power. This echoes a truth that runs, if in other words, throughout the Psalms in the sense that He is in total control of His creation – even over the greatest of land or sea creatures (consider Psalm 74:14, 89:10). He also controls the environment, climate and weather so His creatures have the resources to

sustain them through life on earth (see Psalm 36:6, 104:27-29, 107:23-31,35-38, 135:5-7, 136:4-9, 145:15-17, 147:15-18).

Because of the omnipotence [all-powerful character] of the word of the LORD, Psalm 33:8 calls everyone to fear Him. This introduces the third motivation for praise in this psalm (vv.10,12). The LORD, whose omnipotent voice brought all into being, properly assesses everything mankind does by His omniscient [all-knowing] eye. He individually constituted every person and therefore understands each one of them through and through (vv.13-15; see Psalm 14:2-3). As a result, they have no power against Him (vv.16-17). His eye, which assesses the hearts of the nations, also watches over those who fear Him and hope in His steadfast love (vv.18-19). So the psalmist implies that His love is equal to His power. Yes, the Creator is also the Sovereign, the Judge, the Savior and the Consumator or Finisher!

### **Psalm 36:**

#### **How Excellent Is Thy Lovingkindness!**

Like Psalm 33:5, Psalm 36:5-7 celebrates the steadfast creatorial love of the LORD. In verses 5-6 David

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uses the grandeur of creation for similes of the moral greatness of God. His mercy (NKJV) is as immeasurable as the skies; His faithfulness is as high as the clouds; His righteousness is as immovable as the mountains; and His judgments are as unfathomable as the depths. Contemplating these make David exclaim, “O LORD, You preserve man and beast” (v.6). This thought of the Creator’s benevolence causes David to burst into praise in verse 7: “How excellent [“precious,” ESV] is Thy lovingkindness, O God!” (KJV). David addresses “God” rather than “LORD” because all peoples, not just the covenant nation, depend on their Creator and should also discover Him to be their Protector. Not only is there loving protection, but also fullness of supply, lasting satisfaction, joy, life and light (vv.7-9). In verse 8 “the river of

Your delights [“pleasures,” NKJV]” (ESV) calls to mind the river coming out of Eden (Gen. 2:10-14) and anticipates the millennial river scene of Ezekiel 47 (compare with Psalm 46:4; Joel 3:18; Revelation 22:1). The Creator-God continues to provide of His goodness for all of mankind throughout their entire history (see 1 Timothy 4:10). David dwells on the greatness and goodness of God in conscious contrast to the arrogance and inventiveness of the wicked (vv.1-4). At the end He prays for that steadfast love [“lovingkindness” NKJV] to continue to those who know Him and His righteousness to the upright of heart that they do not fall victim to the arrogant rejecters of God (vv.10-12).

### Section Notes

<sup>1</sup>Or “voice” (ESV footnote). JND footnote explains: “[line,] that is, the ‘extent’ of their testimony.”

## Part 2: The Everlasting God Is My Creator

### Psalm 90:

**God Eternal;  
Man Transient**

God as Creator is closely linked to His eternality. Moses composed this prayer for Israel to lament their wilderness wanderings after God’s judgment came upon them

(compare verses 7-9 with Numbers 14:20-35). As Moses contemplated the long years ahead for that generation of the nation, he was comforted by the fact that the Lord (v.1, “Adonai” means “the Sovereign, the Owner”) has authority over every generation.



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But the ultimate answer to the nation's wanderings and homelessness was that He had been the saints' dwelling place ["refuge," SEPTUAGINT] from the very beginning of time (Dt. 33:27). Unlike us, God is not limited by the time and space He created. From eternity to eternity He is God (v.2, "El" means "the Mighty One"), who had revealed Himself to Moses as the everlasting I AM (Ex. 3:14). However, Moses can only trace back to the first days of creation. God precedes the birth of the mountains on day three of creation (Gen. 1:9-10) as He also, of course, pre-dates day one!

Perhaps Psalm 90:3 alludes to Genesis 3:19 and is filled out in verses 7-12 where God's wrath regarding man's sins has determined his expected lifespan. Yes, man is soon swept [flooded] away – his life no more than a passing dream or grass that quickly grows and soon withers (vv.5-6). Biblically, a thousand years is a very long time on man's timescale (see Revelation 20:2-4), but it merely registers with God as a day or a night watch (v.4, 2 Pet. 3:8). What is our lifespan (v.10) compared to God's eternity? To God, time is nothing (v.2) – He lives in eternity (Isa. 57:15)! Moses recognized man's transience: "the years of our life ... are soon gone, and we fly away" (v.10 ESV). In these days when men

increasingly think that they are in control of the length of their lives, we do well to pray, "So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom" (v.12).

## Psalm 102:

**The One Who Abides  
Forever And Is  
"The Same"**

The psalmist's own experience of human frailty sharpened his sense of God's eternity. Verses 1-11 elaborate on his distress (see title of the psalm). Just when his life was ebbing away (v.11), he turned from self-occupation to his God and exclaimed, "But You, O LORD, are enthroned for ever; You are remembered throughout all generations" (v.12). His cry became more intense as death drew ever nearer: "[God] has broken my strength in midcourse; He has shortened my days. 'O my God,' I say, 'take me not away in the midst of my days'" (vv.23-24). Mid-sentence, the psalmist changed to addressing God as Creator: "You whose years endure throughout all generations" (v.24)! He now saw his own transience from the perspective of God's overall plan for the entire creation (see vv.25-27).

Darby renders verse 27: "Thou art the Same,"<sup>1</sup> "a name of God meaning 'The existing One, who does not change'" (JND footnote).

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Hebrews 1:10-12 applies verses 25-27 directly to Christ, the Son, as one of the proof-texts of His essential deity. The whole psalm is messianic and gives an insight into the Lord's prayers in Gethsemane.<sup>2</sup> The title together with verses 1-11 and 23 express the extremity of His grief. Verse 10 gives the reason: "because of Your indignation and anger." His prayer in verse 24 is interrupted by the Father's ready response, reminding Him, "thou art the Same" (vv.24-27 JND). Darby comments, "The Christ, the despised and rejected Jesus, is Jehovah the Creator ... This contrast of the extreme humiliation and isolation of Christ, and His divine nature [that is, as the Creator], is incomparably striking."<sup>3</sup>

## Psalm 104:

### **Celebration Of The Creator And All His Works**

The psalmist's own personal celebration arose from his consideration of God manifest [displayed] in His many acts at creation and in His ongoing involvement with it. In musing over the Genesis account of creation, the psalmist composed poetry by which his soul could bless the LORD. The praise exhibits a striking, if general, correspondence to the days of the creation week:

- Verses 1-4 introduce the Creator in all His divine majesty and awesome power.
- Verse 2 mentions light, which came on day one (Gen. 1:3-5). The verse then extends light to include the formation of the starry universe, created on day four (Gen. 1:16).
- Verses 3-4 explain how God operates in the heavens He formed on day two (Gen. 1:6-8).
- Verse 5 introduces the earth, which is the focus of the remainder of the psalm and indicates God's special interest in it. Verses 6-9 recall how the Creator separated the land from the seas on day three (Gen. 1:9-10) so the earth could be inhabited.
- Verses 10-18 laud the provision of water for the earth to allow vegetation, plants and trees to spring forth so there is food and drink for all creatures, including man. This also commenced on day three (Gen. 1:11-13).
- Verses 19-23 recall, as happened on day four, the divine appointment and design of the sun and the moon to govern the seasons, days and nights, and years (Gen. 1:14-19).
- Verses 24-26 rejoice in the profusion of creatures on the land and in the seas, which were cre-

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ated on days five and six (Gen. 1:20-25). The description is prefaced by a special note of praise: “O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom have You made them all” (v.24 ESV).

- Verses 27-30 give poetic voice to Genesis 1:29-31, extolling the dependence of all creatures, terrestrial and aquatic, upon the Creator for life and death, sustenance and safety. (This theme is taken up again in Psalm 107 with the appropriate response of verse 31: “Let them thank the LORD for His steadfast love, for His wondrous works [including the storms of vv.23-30] to the children of men!”)
- Psalm 104:31-35 provides a fitting finale of glory and praise from the psalmist (and from us also!) to the Creator, and these verses correspond to day seven, the Sabbath (Gen. 2:1-3).

## Psalm 139:13-18:

### God Made Me!

For David, life in essence was “God and me.” In verses 1-6 the all-knowing God knew and saw everything in David’s life. Verses 7-12 tell us the everywhere-present God was always there with David, through all of life and even in death (compare Psalm 23:4). And verses 19-24 teach the all-

righteousness of God. But in verses 13-18 David confessed that his God, the all-powerful One, is the Creator who personally made him as an individual!

Verse 13 declares, “You formed my inward parts; You knitted me together in my mother’s womb.”

- The design and begetting of a human life (of you and me) is God’s work alone, even though (your and my) parents were used of Him in this process! God is intimately involved with every human being from the very start of his or her existence. Conception, the formation of the fetus of a baby and its ultimate birth are profound mysteries which science does not and cannot explain – either the “How?” or the “Why?” – even with a knowledge of DNA!
- “Formed my inward parts” is literally “possessed my kidneys.” “Possessed” implies that God is Lord. The NIV reads: “You created my inmost being.” “Kidneys” in Scripture represents the seat of our desires and longings, our moral compass, our inner motives and the things which God tests (see Jeremiah 17:10). God is “Lord” of these.
- “Knitted” means “intricately woven together” as a complex

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unity. “Your hands have fashioned and made me ... like clay ... You clothed me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews” (Job 10:8-9,11 ESV).

- “In my mother’s womb” means that a fetus [unborn baby] is a real person from conception!

No wonder David said in verse 14, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well.”

- “Fearfully” means “I am to be in awe of [hold in reverence]” the specialness of my body.
- “Wonderfully” [marvelously] is a comment upon the complexity of the human anatomy. Each person is made differently – is unique!

David continues in verse 15: “My frame was not hidden from You, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.”

- “My frame” means “my skeleton.”
- “In secret ... in the depths of the earth” is a Hebrew expression for the deepest concealment and intimacy of the process of procreation.
- “Intricately woven” is “embroidered” (similar in meaning to verse 13), showing that each

part of the human anatomy is curiously fashioned by God. This “fashioning” is the secret behind what we now know is the human genome [all the genetic information contained in our DNA].

“Your eyes saw my unformed substance” (v.16) confirms that the embryo is designed and known by God. In Hebrew, “unformed substance [body]” is “embryo.” The human embryo medically is the first eight weeks after conception. “Unformed” means “unperfect” (KJV) – giving the idea of not fully developed, yet possessing life from God. Fundamentally, my life and your life are sacred because they come from God!

“In Your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them” (v.16 ESV). How blessed to understand that God has His special plan for the exact number of days for your life and mine (and also for the life of every other person) from conception to death (or to the Lord’s coming)! So, like David, we confess, “How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with You” (vv.17-18).

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## Christ's By Creation And Redemption!

**LORD, we are *Thine*:** our God Thou art;  
Fashioned and made we were, as clay;  
These curious frames, in every part,  
Thy wisdom, power, and love display;  
Each breath we draw, each pulse that beats,  
Each organ formed by skill divine,  
Each precious sense aloud repeats  
Great GOD, that we are only *Thine*.

**LORD, we are *Thine*:** in Thee we live,  
Supported by Thy tender care:  
Thou dost each hourly mercy give –  
Thine earth we tread, we breathe *Thine* air;  
Raiment and food Thy hands supply,  
Thy sun's bright rays around us shine;  
Guarded by *Thine* all-seeing eye,  
We own that we are wholly *Thine*.

**LORD, we are *Thine*:** bought by Thy blood –  
Once the poor guilty slaves of sin;  
Thou hast redeemed us unto God,  
And made Thy Spirit dwell within;  
Our sinful wanderings Thou hast borne  
With love and patience all divine:  
As brands, then, from the burning torn,  
We own that we are wholly *Thine*.

**LORD, we are *Thine*:** Thy claims we own –  
Ourselves to Thee would humbly give;  
Reign Thou within our hearts alone,  
And let us to Thy glory live;  
Here may we each Thy mind display,  
In all Thy gracious image shine;  
So shall we hail that looked-for day,  
When Thou shalt own that we are *Thine*.<sup>4</sup>

### Section Notes

<sup>1</sup>In the Old Testament, "The Same" is sometimes translated "I am HE" – see Deuteronomy 32:39 (JND) footnote, with its references.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew 26:36-45, Mark 14:32-41 and Luke 22:41-44.

<sup>3</sup>J. N. Darby, *Synopsis of the Bible*, (Kingston on Thames, London, Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, 1943), Vol. II, page 161.

<sup>4</sup>"LORD We Are *Thine*," James G. Deck (1802-84), as printed in *Hymns of Light and Love*, (Bath, Echoes Of Service).



## Part 3: Creation's Hallelujah–Crescendo!

**P**salms 145-150 celebrate the blessed reign of the Creator over His restored creation with creation's "hallelujahs" (compare with Revelation 11:15, 19:1,3-4,6). Hence the repeated opening and closing refrains of Psalms 146-150: "Praise the LORD! [Hallelujah!]." While these "hallelujah psalms" primarily celebrate the power and glory of Messiah's rule, they also express the praise that all creation ought to give now to its Creator.

### Psalm 145

Psalms 146-150's grand finale of hallelujahs to the Creator flows out of Psalm 145. Literally, its title is "David's praise" and it completes all his personal worship (v.21). The psalm is full of hope of Christ's rule (see verse 13 as an example) and it extols the greatness (vv.1-7), goodness (vv.8-10), glory (vv.11-13), providence (vv.14-16) and saving grace (vv.17-21) of David's "God and King" (v.1).

As the last alphabetical psalm,<sup>1</sup> Psalm 145 is a complete<sup>2</sup> acrostic of praise from David, the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23:1). His prophetic vision of the Creator present upon earth was of "One [who] rules justly over men

... He dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth" (2 Sam. 23:1,3-4 ESV).

Knowing their Creator, restored Israel will also praise in each ensuing generation throughout the millennium (v.4). They have firsthand experience of Him – all His majesty, awe-inspiring acts, ever-flowing and abundant goodness, ability to establish and maintain righteousness with grace and tender mercy (vv.5-9). But above all, they will appreciate His abundant steadfast love ("great loving-kindness," v.8 JND). Every part of His creation ("all that He has made," v.9 ESV)



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benefits from His presence and responds appropriately with thanksgiving (v.10). However, His saints are able to bless Him (v.10), speak of the glory of His kingdom and tell of His power, making Him known to the children of men throughout the entire globe (vv.11-12). The result is that in the millennium there will be universal acceptance of the sovereign Creator (v.13).

Verses 14-20 outline what dependence on the Creator's constant benevolence [compassion, kindness] will mean in practical terms. Throughout the millennium there will be help for the vulnerable (v.14), food for all creatures (vv.15-16), speedy answers to prayers (vv.18-19) and total preservation of those who love Him (v.20).

David concluded his meditation on Messiah's rule by expressing that the Creator's praise will outlast the millennium and will continue past the end of time into eternity (v.21, compare with v.1).

### Psalm 146

The praise of Psalm 146 contrasts dependence upon man – of whatever status (vv.3-4) – with the blessedness of the one whose help and hope are in “my God” (v.2 JND). As a godly Israelite, the psalmist personally knew the Creator and appreciated His grace as

revealed by the name the “God of Jacob” (v.5). Like Jacob, he had come into the blessedness of God's faithfulness. His hope was in his God, who is “the LORD ... who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them” (vv.5-6 ESV). The Creator is the compassionate One who has sovereign rights that are both judicial and moral (v.7). Hence the praise repeats the themes of justice, providence, saving grace and tender mercy found in Psalm 145:6-9. It also echoes Psalm 145 in that it climaxes with the enduring praise of the everlasting reign of the LORD (v.10).

### Psalm 147

Psalm 147 invites re-gathered Israel to praise their God (vv.1-2,12), who is the great and powerful Creator (vv. 4-5,8,14-18). He is the tender Protector of His new-covenant people, “who hope in his steadfast love” (vv.2-3,11-14). Verse 4 says He is the same One who determined the number of the stars and named all of them (see Isaiah 40:26-31)! Verses 8-9 arise from a second invitation to praise (v.7) and include praise/thanks for His providential care for all His creatures (including the ceremonially unclean ravens) via the natural food cycle. His providential care is executed by His creatorial control of the elements (snow,

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wind and water) and their seasonal variation through the means of His commanding, powerful word (vv.15-18).

But to restored Israel He will give peace and prosperity – “the finest of wheat” (v.14). Therefore the invitation to “praise the LORD” is renewed in verse 12, with verses 13-20 listing reasons for it. Most of all, Israel’s special relationship with the LORD includes the privileges of knowing (and propagating) His written Word (vv.19-20, compare with Psalm 145:11-12).

Notice that verse 1 announces that praise is good, pleasant and fitting for the people of God (including us!) whenever they fear Him (that is, accept His all-powerful wisdom). Praise sets their hope in Him – their trust in His steadfast love (v.11).

## Psalm 148

Psalm 148 commands universal praise – from the heavens and the earth. We know from Romans 8:19-22 why such praise will rise during the millennial reign of Christ. Verse 4 is an echo of creation day two when the heavens were formed (see Nehemiah 9:6); and the “waters above the heavens” suggest the re-establishment of Edenic climatic conditions. Verses 5-6 invite heavenly beings (v.2, compare Psalm 29:1-2) and

heavenly bodies (v.3) to praise the LORD. He is the Creator, Controller and Sustainer of the latter, “for He commanded and they were created. And He established them forever and ever; He gave a decree [“law of nature”] and it shall not pass away.”

Verses 7-14 invoke praise from the planet earth – the seas and all in them; all the elements of nature; mountains and hills; plants, animals and birds; as well as from all peoples whatever their status or age (compare with Psalm 103:21-22). In verses 11-13 the whole of mankind is required to raise an adequate “hallelujah chorus.” But verse 14 says it is especially from “the people of Israel who are near to Him.”

Israel has a central and universal significance for the whole life of creation. Darby comments, “The great Creator whom heaven and earth must praise is the God of Israel, and Israel His people.”<sup>3</sup> Israel is the people called by Jehovah’s name (2 Chr. 7:14 JND). It is the excellence of Jehovah’s name and His transcendent majesty (Ps. 8:1) that generate praise from a restored earth (v.13).

## Psalm 149

Psalm 149 arises out of Psalms 146 and 148 and it anticipates the millennium by commanding the “new song” in which revived

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Israel shall rejoice in its Maker with joyfulness and gladness of heart (v.2). This ecstatic praise is expressed both publicly and privately (vv.3,5) and is elaborated upon in Psalms 93 and 96-100. The children of Zion rejoice in their long-awaited King (v.2). According to Psalm 147:20, this rejoicing also occurs when the nation wakes up to the privileges of its calling (see Psalm 110:3). But the new song can only be maintained throughout the world by the application of divine righteousness. Therefore verses 6-9 remind Israel to be the effective instrument of God's government (compare with Isaiah 26:9), which is why the psalm ends with a resounding hallelujah of victory!

## Psalm 150

Psalm 150 is the grand finale both of these "hallelujah psalms" and of the entire Psalter. It celebrates the actual realization of all the hopes and aspirations in Messiah found in all the prophetic psalms. It is a fitting doxology to the Creator from "everything that has breath" (v.6).

Verse 1 tells *who will be praised* – the LORD ("Hallelu-Jah") who is also God ("Hallelu-El"). It also tells *where praise will be found* during the millennium – in the sanctuary (v.1) of the temple, His chosen dwelling-place in Jerusalem,

the capital of Israel and the metropolis of the world (compare Psalm 65:1 with Ezekiel 48:35). But His praise extends to the whole universe (v.1) and fills His mighty heavens, because His creatorial glory fills the universe and His praise must do no less.

Verse 2 explains *why He will be worshiped* – for what He does through His mighty deeds (v.2, see Psalm 33:6-9) and for His excellent greatness (v.2, consider Psalm 8:1) because He is the Creator and the Sovereign.

Verses 3-5 state *how He will be praised* – with all the instruments that are used by Israel in worship.

Verse 6 states *who shall praise Him* in its invitation: "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD" (v.6)! Stated literally, "all breath [every living creature which breathes]" means the total variety of life mentioned in Psalm 148:7-12. This includes the whole of mankind from kings to children, who will "Praise the LORD!" **GT**

### Section Notes

<sup>1</sup>Alphabetical psalms all have an acrostic formation – the verses begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

<sup>2</sup>This assumes acceptance of the inclusion of verse 13 in ESV, that is the Hebrew letter Nun, as in the SEPTUAGINT.

<sup>3</sup>J. N. Darby, *Synopsis of the Bible*, (Kingston on Thames, London, Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, 1943), Vol. II, p.185.

# Prayer

**P**rayer is talking to God. Does that sound hard or mysterious? Prayer should be as easy and natural for the Christian as talking to any friend. You don't need a special language, certain words, or even to speak out loud, because God easily reads your mind (Heb. 4:12-13). We are told to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16 NKJV). Of course, we should not be careless or disrespectful in our language just as we wouldn't be with our parents, our boss, our teachers and others whom we should respect.

The Bible speaks of some special aspects of prayer, all of which may and probably should be included whenever we "let our requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6). These are:

**Prayers:** (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1). This is the general term used for talking to God.

**Supplications:** (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1). Supplication has the thought of asking for mercy – imploring or

respectfully begging God for a particular need that you have.

**Intercessions:** (1 Tim. 2:1). With intercession you pray for someone else – for a particular need of that person.

**Thanksgiving:** (Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:1). In thanksgiving we thank God for His kindness to us in the hundreds of things daily that we have for which to be thankful. In fact we are told, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Th. 5:18).

**Worship:** (Ps. 95:6). In worship we thank God for Himself. We tell God how worthy He is. In the pattern-prayer of the Gospels (Mt. 6:9-13; Lk. 11:2-4) worship comes first: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Mt. 6:9). All effective prayer must include worship!

It is our duty to pray. Samuel told the Israelites, "Far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam. 12:23). The Lord Jesus plainly said that "men always ought to pray" (Lk. 18:1). We can't all be great evangelists or great teachers – but we can all pray. No special gift is required! **GT**



# FATHERHOOD AND SONSHIP

by Roger Penney

**W**e see several father-son relationships in Scripture. It is my desire for us to consider parallels in these as we consider several points. Among the relationships I found are:

- God the Father and God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ,
- God and the first man, Adam,
- The Father and believers today, and
- Fathers and their sons and daughters.

## God Is Our Heavenly Father

We tend to think of our Father in heaven according to our experience or observations of human fathers. But no matter what our perception, the fact is God our Father, whose very nature is loving and just, only wants the best for

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us; and He delights in seeing us grow to be like the His Son, Jesus Christ.

Reading the genealogy in Luke 3 we follow the ancestry of the Lord Jesus through Mary, whose husband was Joseph. The Lord is said there to be “the son of Joseph” (v.23). Concluding the list of names we read that Adam was “the son of God” (v.38). In contrast to the Lord who was the Perfect Man as presented by Luke, Adam eventually sinned – and we followed in his steps.

### **Learning The Fatherhood Of God**

When we become Christians we start an exciting, sometimes difficult, journey like that of children who need to learn, grow and obey. It is the best of journeys, affecting us spiritually, emotionally and intellectually. This journey begins when we first come to the Lord Jesus: God gives us a new spirit and a new heart; and the Holy Spirit begins to dwell within us (Ezek. 36:24-28). But we still behave badly at times while we live on earth.

From our earthly experience we see that a truly loving father will discipline his children. Without this, boys and girls will grow up to be lawless and without self-control. The writer to the Hebrews advises us, “My son despise not

thou the chastening [discipline] of the Lord” (Heb. 12:5-8 *KJV*, consider Proverbs 3:11-12). Of course if the Fall (Gen. 3) had not occurred, then there would be no need to discipline children. Let’s consider some things from before the time that sin entered the world to see God’s desires related to His sons and daughters.

### **God The Designer**

The first two chapters of the Bible tell us how God designed man and intended him to be. The first thought expressed by God is “Let Us make man in Our image.” The “Us” and “Our” tells us immediately of the Trinity – the Godhead acting in unity (Gen. 1:26). Man was created by the combined and united action of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Already in that loving and eternal relationship which is the Godhead we see the plan for all healthy and wise human relationships.

### **God The Craftsman, Man As God’s Regent**

The word “make” in Genesis 1:26 is not the same as “create” in Genesis 1:1. Create is to bring into being through the creative will, infinite energy and word of the Creator. It is a creation, *ex nihilo* as the academics say – “out of nothing.” Only God can do that. The word used here and translated



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ed “make” means to make out of already existing materials.

The passage is very interesting for it goes on to say that “God created man” (v.27) – He was both created and made. This is also applied to sea creatures and flying things (vv.20-21). However, the use of the word “make” implies God’s special care and purpose. This special standing of man in the creation by God is further emphasized in Genesis 2 where we see this creative activity in finer detail.

In verses 7-8 another word, “formed,” is used. This means to mold or to sculpt; as a sculptor his model and a potter his clay. Later we see that the LORD God “formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them (v.19).

What a beautiful scene: God being with and introducing Adam to the animals over whom his work is to rule with benevolence, such as God exerted over a perfect creation. He gives His son the privilege and responsibility of naming the animals. God had set man already as His regent [governor] on the earth. Adam was the “son of God” and acted on behalf of the Father as a “firstborn.” Sons and fathers should have the same relationship, with the son acting for the father in accor-

dance to the Word of God.

The title “firstborn” and the regency was lost by Adam because of sin. But Another came who was to fulfill the title and position and to “restore that which He took not away” (Ps. 69:4). The Lord Jesus is the Firstborn over all creation, the origin of life and the object of worship of angels and the Church (Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:6, 12:23).

### In Conversation With God

God wants us to be like His Son, the Lord Jesus, and He exhorts us through the apostle Paul: “Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, says the Lord ... and I will receive you and will be a Father to you” (2 Cor. 6:18).

The early chapters of Genesis show us the privileges we have as God’s New Creation. Immediately after the Fall, Adam and Eve “heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (Gen. 3:8). God called to them. It was obviously His custom to walk and to talk with the first couple. During these visits there must have been a happy and refreshing dialogue between God and the human couple He had created – that is until sin was found in them. In loving judgment God removed them from the garden, and the closeness of this relationship was no longer enjoyed.

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But in the Lord Jesus our sonship is restored and we may walk with Him. He promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). Sadly, we often fail to recognize His presence beside us. Yet if we are enjoying His companionship, the dialogue which we have with Him and He with us is a joyful pleasure!

### **A High Calling And Status**

In believing, we are God's "sons and daughters" (2 Cor. 6:18) – achieved through the work of our Lord Jesus Christ and not by any efforts of our own. Now, having been born of God's Spirit, we are exhorted to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18), taking on His likeness which is pleasing to God the Father (Jn. 3:3,5; 1 Jn. 3:2-3). As the Lord Jesus has "overcome the world," we also may overcome the world.

### **God's Husbandry**

Just as God "planted a garden, eastward in Eden" (Gen. 2:8), so we too are God's planting, His husbandry. But, in the New Testament we see that we also become "labourers together with God" (1 Cor. 3:9). Paul wrote, "I have planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6). We may then join in this labor of love, planting good things

in God's garden and going forth for His harvest (Jn. 4:35-38). In doing so we earn wages for life eternal. What a great privilege is ours to enter into the labor of God and share in the tasks in which He is busy. It was the Creator who planted the garden, but it was Adam who was to tend and guard it, and to "replenish the earth" (Gen. 1:28). We also, through evangelism and shepherding, help prepare a rich harvest and a beautiful garden for eternity.

### **A Father To Be Honored**

We must not forget Malachi's injunction to the people of his own time, which also applies to us: "A son honours his father and a servant his master. If then I be a Father where is My honour?" (Mal. 1:6). There is much loose and frivolous talk among Christians today concerning the nature of God and of His character. Also, there is often a lack of respect for one another. John reminds us, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (Jn. 13:13-17; 1 Jn. 4:11).

We are all part of a vast family of brothers and sisters; and there is also a Head of that family. We need to work harder in loving and in honoring all members of that family while being sure that we are honoring our Father, following in the footsteps of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. **GT**



The purpose of this column is to help you study the Bible on your own. Look up the Bible references and think about them before writing your answers. Do not send this study to us, as this is not a correspondence course.

DISCOVER WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT  
HAS TO SAY ABOUT

WISDOM

IN THE GOSPELS

By Alan Groth



*“The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.”*

—Luke 11:31 NKJV

In our past studies, we have been looking at the writings of Solomon in which he was sharing the importance of wisdom and the need we all have to gain wisdom. These writings were found in the Old Testament. In the next few studies in the *Discover* column, we will look at a number of passages speaking about wisdom found in the New Testament. The Gospels bring out some interesting thoughts concerning wisdom. Let’s search them out.

1. Read Matthew 11:15-19, Luke 7:29-35. How is wisdom portrayed in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Read Matthew 12:38-42, Luke 11:29-32. What is said about wisdom in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read Matthew 13:53-58, Mark 6:1-6. Whose wisdom did the people comment on? \_\_\_\_\_

Where was the Lord Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

Did they receive Him? \_\_\_\_\_

How did Jesus get His wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Read Luke 1:13-17. What kind of wisdom is mentioned in verse 17?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Read Luke 2:40. Who is the Child spoken of in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

As a Child, He was \_\_\_\_\_ with wisdom.

6. Read Luke 2:41-52. How old was Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

When Jesus returned to Nazareth from Jerusalem, He increased in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and in \_\_\_\_\_ with God and man.

7. Read Luke 11:45-51. Whose wisdom is found in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Were those who were sent received by the leaders? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Read Luke 21:12-19. What kind of wisdom is given? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If we stand and testify, what will happen to us? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Next month we'll Discover what the New Testament  
has to say about wisdom.

# Divine Titles

## AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

### Part Eight

by A. J. Pollock

### *The Word*

This is a title of our blessed Lord. In the majestic opening of John's Gospel we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God" (Jn. 1:1-2 NKJV).

Why should "the Word" [Greek: *Logos*] be used to indicate a divine Person? An illustration will help here. I have often been in foreign lands whose languages were unfamiliar to me, sometimes sitting in a room alone with another Christian for considerable time. The two of us were intelligent and mannered, yet there we sat looking at each other, unable to know each other's minds all for the lack of a spoken word which was understandable by us both – all for the lack of a medium of conveying our thoughts one to the other. How amazing that when the God of infinite love wished to make His mind known to His creature

for his eternal blessing, He should give to man a living Word – a Person, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

As we closely examine John 1:1-2, it becomes more and more wonderful. Note the following.

- The Word was in the beginning – from all eternity.
- The Word was with God – a distinct personality.
- The Word was God – deity is claimed for the Word.
- The Word was with God in the beginning – eternally a distinct personality.

As we study these claims of Scripture we begin to see who the Lord is from all eternity.

For the sake of clarity writers sometimes speak of "God absolute" and "God relative." What is meant by these terms? When we think of God as Father and Son and Spirit, One God, God in all His fullness, we mean God absolute [unqualified, complete]. When we read of

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the Word's being with God we think of God relative [in respect to the absolute]. We learn that the Word is relative to God. When we speak of the Father and the Son, then we have God the Father relative to the Son; and the Son (or Word), who is God, relative to the Father. This is a great mystery, and we only gather these thoughts as revealed in God's Holy Word.

We are told in Scripture that God absolute dwells in unapproachable light, that no one has seen Him nor can see Him – and that will be true for all eternity (1 Tim. 6:16). Yet, thank God, He has been pleased to reveal Himself in a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Himself God as the Father is God and the Holy Spirit is God. We gladly sing:

*The higher mysteries of Thy fame  
The creature's grasp transcend;  
The Father only, Thy blest name  
Of Son can comprehend.  
(Josiah Conder, 1789-1855)*

There has been an attempt by a certain religious group to belittle the person of our Lord on this point. They claim that the literal Greek of John 1:1 says that the Lord Jesus was only *a* god, an inferior god, created as the head of the God's creation – a creature with power to create all else. They deceive the uninformed. In the Greek language, from which

the New Testament was translated, there is a definite article [the], but there is no indefinite article [a/an]. So it is not right to speak of the Word as “a god.” Furthermore, the passage goes on to say, “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (Jn. 1:3). This completely refutes the idea that our Lord was created, while it asserts that He is the Creator of everything without a single exception.

When John 1:1 says that “The Word was with God,” it means God absolute: Father, Son and Spirit, One God, the fullness of the Trinity. If it had gone on to say that the Word was “the God,” it would have indicated that our Lord was Father, Son and Spirit, which would not have been true. But when it says, “The Word was God,” without putting in the definite article, we see deity claimed for the Word – God relative. Thus carefully did the inspired Word of God put the definite article where it is needed, and left it out when its insertion would not have conveyed the truth of the relative position of our Lord in the Godhead.

Then further we read: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14). Is it

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not wonderful that the Son, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Word, chosen of the Father to reveal God to man, should stoop to man's estate [rank] and dwell among men?

### *The Eternal Life*

Our Lord came into this world to manifest a life which was with the Father from all eternity. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life – the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us – that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:1-3).

The two words "eternal life" taken at their face value in this connection indicate nothing less than deity. Eternal life means life without a beginning or ending. No one has inherent life but God alone, and no one has eternal life

inherently except God. So we read: "We know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 Jn. 5:20). So here we have the true God coupled with the title, Eternal Life – a description only attributable to a divine Person.

Was it not wonderful that this life which was with the Father was seen when our Lord was here on earth, a life perfectly pleasing to the Father? And is it not blessed beyond words that the life that was inherent in our Lord is conferred by God as a gift (Rom. 6:23) upon all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him as Savior? This does not raise man to the level of deity, but a divine life is conferred and in receiving it believers become partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). They share the moral features of the life of God. This is purchased for them by the atoning sufferings of the Son of God (1 Jn. 4:9). **GT**

*Look for the continuation of this Series in next month's edition!*

**The life that was inherent in our Lord is conferred by God as a gift upon all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him as Savior.**



# ESTHER

by Leslie M. Grant



*“For Mordecai was great in the king’s palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for this man Mordecai became increasingly prominent.” —Esther 9:4 NKJV*

Esther means “I will be hidden.” The book deals with the Jews during the time of their captivity, outside their own land, hidden among the nations, yet cared for providentially by the God whom they had disobeyed. God’s name is not found in the book – He is also hidden. He could not link His name publicly with them for their dispersion was due to chastening [correction] because of disobedience. Moreover, these people had chosen to remain in Persia despite God’s having opened the way for them to return to Israel. They had no real concern for returning to God’s place for them when others had done so.

Still, God’s overruling hand in mercy and protection is beautifully seen here. It is typical of the bless-

ing that is to come to the now-scattered children of Israel after much cruel affliction and persecution.

Esther herself reminds us of the beauty that God sees in His people in spite of their failure and departure. Mordecai is a type of Christ, first in protecting the Gentile king from those who plotted his death and then in becoming greater and greater among the Gentiles after having first been marked out for death.

How well this account illustrates the dealings of God with any true believer who becomes careless and disobedient in his ways! He has no real communion with God and no joy in the Lord’s presence. Yet God cares for him by means of trials that have in view his restoration in submission to the Lord. **GT**

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*This column is taken from the book “The Bible, Its 66 Books In Brief.”  
It is available for purchase from Believer’s Bookshelf USA ([www.bbusa.org](http://www.bbusa.org))  
and Believers Bookshelf Canada ([www.bbcan.org](http://www.bbcan.org)).*

by David Alberts

# Marriage Glue

There is an old hymn, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” that reminds us of the faithfulness of our God towards us. The first verse says:

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.  
(Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866-1960)*

A portion of the chorus states, “All I have needed Thy hand hath provided – Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.” God’s faithfulness never changes. Likewise in marriage, faithfulness is exceedingly important – even when we see much unfaithfulness during this day in which we live.

Trusting in God’s plan for our lives is vital. When a Christian man and woman are doing so and

are brought together for marriage, they must realize that God has faithfully brought them to each other. He knows the need we have to be loved and to love.

When God instituted marriage it was because He saw that it was not good for man to be alone, so He created a

helpmate perfectly fit for him (Gen. 2:18).

God’s way of providing a helpmate for Adam was to take a rib from Adam’s side in order to create his wife, Eve. The rib came from near Adam’s heart so he would love and cherish her as his own body. She was taken from under his arm that he might protect and provide for her. His helpmate was taken from his side to

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stand by him in all that life involves. This is still what God intends for marriage today. God has not changed His pattern from that very first marriage.

Our God went on to say in Genesis 2:24, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (KJV). It is very beautiful to see how God faithfully takes two individuals and molds them into one. It is much more than just a physical union – it is a spiritual and emotional one as well. The word “cleave” in this verse really means to “cling to” or be “glued” together. Let’s consider four things that will help keep your marriage “glued” together.

## 1. LOOK

### *To The Needs Of Each Other*

The first thing is to look for how you can meet the needs of your spouse. Scripture says in Philippians 2:4, “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” As an unmarried individual you only needed to see that your own needs were met. Now as a married man your responsibility as stated in Ephesians 5 is to love, nourish and cherish your wife as much as you would care for yourself. This means putting her needs above your own. As a wife you need to

willingly and lovingly submit to your husband’s leadership. Look for ways you can encourage him in his responsibilities.

Both of you must look for ways to meet the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of your spouse. Meeting emotional needs means being available to your spouse with understanding and love during the ups and downs of life. Spiritual needs are met through reading Scripture together and seeking to help each other apply it to your life. The intimacy that God says is honorable in marriage should be shared freely and enjoyed with your spouse to meet the physical needs. Look up to God in prayer together and alone that He may show you how to meet these needs.

## 2. LISTEN

### *Carefully*

Listen! Good communication is so important in marriage and it starts with listening carefully to each other. In James 1:19 God says, “Wherefore, My beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” It has been said that God gave us two ears and one mouth so we would listen twice as much as we speak. Listening means that we focus on what our spouse is telling us and act on it. What is being communicated may be verbal as well as

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nonverbal. For men the nonverbal can be more difficult, so we need to look as well as listen.

Don't let the busyness of life take away from the time that you share your hearts with each other. Always be open and honest with one another and create a relationship where there is trust and no fear to tell each other your thoughts. When there are misunderstandings, resolve them quickly and lovingly.

### 3. LOVE

#### **Sacrificially**

The third thing is to love as God describes in 1 Corinthians 13: "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." If you aren't able to remember all these things, at least remember the first two: "Love suffers long and is kind."

In your marriage you will need patience and kindness. Kindness includes being willing to say, "I was wrong." It means you are willing to forgive each other as Christ also has forgiven you. This love is a sacrificial love that

always puts God and our spouse above ourselves. How can you fulfil this love toward each other?

As believers in the Lord Jesus you each have the Holy Spirit living in you. Galatians 5 reminds us that the first feature of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love. If He is in control, His love will be seen. Beside this love there will also be in your marriage the added benefit of joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. I'm sure these are things we would all desire in our marriages, so let the Holy Spirit be in control.

### 4. LIVE

#### **Abundantly**

Lastly, live abundantly the life the Lord Jesus desires for you to live together. He said in John 10 that He came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. This means seeking together to serve Him and follow His leading in your marriage. Read His Word together to hear His voice. Enjoy one another fully – laughing *together*, crying *together* and serving others *together*. And spend time in recreational activities *together*.

### BE ENCOURAGED

I encourage *both* of you, husband and wife, to **look** to the needs of each other, **listen** carefully, **love**

sacrificially and **live** abundantly. In doing so, God will be faithful to keep you “glued together.”

Remember, the vows of commitment you expressed at your wedding were before God, who has been faithful to you. By being faithful to Him and fulfilling those vows

as God expects of you, He will abundantly bless you and make you a blessing to others. There are many couples who can testify to God’s faithfulness to bless because they were faithful to their vows and to Him. May you be counted together in that number! **GT**



## RESPONSE

### **You are doing a great job.**

Your monthly *Grace & Truth Magazine* is superb. I can’t tell you enough how much we enjoy reading it. The articles are so deep, moving on our hearts. – *California, USA*

**I absolutely love your magazines!** I love the thought-provoking and educational articles contained in them and I intend to help in whatever small financial way I can once I am released. – *Florida, USA*

**Your magazine is the best spiritual magazine** I have ever read, and I read a lot. In the very near future I will send you a donation. – *Michigan, USA*

**I liked the article “Wells Of Salvation”** featured in the

May ‘14 issue. That was a very nice subject.

– *Visakhapatnam, India*

**The issue in May 2014** about the three women is excellent!

– *Colombo, Sri Lanka*

**I must say your magazine has to be one of the most knowledgeable,** Word-driven, wisdom-filled magazines – which I proudly read every month. Almost every article has some theme, story, Bible study or teaching I can apply almost everyday in my life.

– *Alabama, USA*

**I was much moved and touched** with the article on “Pleasing Him In All Things” in the June 2014 edition. It was very inspirational.

– *Chikhwawa, Malawi*

# Q&A

**So many people today seem to have lost hope. Where is hope found? Where can we turn to find it?**

**H**ope is found in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is “our hope” (1 Tim. 1:1 NKJV). Without Him we have no hope (Eph. 2:12), no help (Rom. 5:6) and no home (Jn. 14:1-6). But with and through Him we have a hope that does not disappoint and we have power within us to enjoy the hope we have (Rom. 5:5).

Believers, even in a time of darkness and despair, are connected to the God of Hope who is able to fill us with all joy and peace that we might abound in hope (Rom. 15:13)! He wants to remind His own: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11). Psalm 62:5-8 reminds us, “My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock

of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.”

In those difficult times we need to be encouraged to “lift up my eyes to the hills – from whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber” (Ps. 121:1-3). When we do that, the question we ask ourselves is “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God” (Ps. 42:11).

If you are hurting today, know that there is hope for the hurting and help for the helpless in the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn it all, and your whole life, over to Him today!

—Answered by  
*Timothy P. Hadley*

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# “The Last Day Of My Life”

by Stephen Campbell



In March 2011 a terrible tsunami devastated the northeast coast of Japan. As the wave approached, 60-year-old Hiromitsu Shinkawa raced into his concrete home for a few belongings. But he had less time than he thought and the sea was stronger than he expected. Within minutes Hiromitsu’s house was broken up. The man found himself flailing underwater before desperately pulling himself up on a piece of his own roof. The water propelled him forward, then it reversed course and sped away from land – finally leaving Hiromitsu adrift on his broken rooftop, alone, ten miles out in the Pacific Ocean.

Many regions of the world experience similar natural disasters. But far more familiar are the calamities of life: health lost, finances upended, family broken, hope gone. Within moments these can transform any ordinary day into an unforeseen tragedy. We find out that we had less time than we thought and the sea of despair is stronger than we expected.

The Bible identifies the source of this despair as the problem of sin. The “sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29 NKJV) has marred God’s creation and propelled mankind away from Him. People honor God with their lips but remain far from Him in their hearts (Mt. 15:8).

Two days after the tsunami, rescuers found Hiromitsu – dehydrated and delirious, but alive. Later he said, “No helicopters or boats that came nearby noticed me. I thought that day was going to be the last day of my life.”

You may also feel abandoned in your gloom. Perhaps no one nearby even notices your misery. But your Rescuer is near! The Savior, Jesus, has overcome the distance caused by sin. He knows what sorrow is, for He Himself has sorrowed. He knows the depths of sin, for He Himself paid sin’s penalty when He died on a cross and accepted God’s judgment on your behalf (1 Pet. 3:18). He knows where you have drifted, and He comes to you at this moment. Trust the risen Savior as your own and accept His tender deliverance from the sea of sin. **GT**

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