

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

PSALMS 42-49

Tonight's psalms, Psalms 42-49, are evidence of God's amazing grace.

They're labeled, "A contemplation of the sons of Korah."

In Numbers 16, Korah leads a revolt in the wilderness against Moses and Aaron. Korah was a Levite - a member of the tribe God raised up to help in the Tabernacle worship. But Korah took too much upon himself.

He began to question Moses' authority and leadership.

Numbers 16:32 recounts God's judgment, "the ground split apart under them, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah..." And who the ground didn't get verse 35 tells us, "A fire came out from the LORD and consumed..."

God put down the rebellion with a mudslide and a lightning strike...

Korah, his sidekicks, and their families all died in God's judgment that day... with one exception... *the sons of Korah!* Later in Numbers (26:11) we're told, "Nevertheless the children of Korah did not die."

Why Korah's sons were exempt and preserved we're not told, but we know their response to God's grace... They were appreciative!

They determined to never again allow rebellion to spoil their worship. They were faithful to God and played a key role in Israel's spiritual life.

Notice too, these psalms are called “**Maschils**” or *contemplations*.

How ironic that some of the Bible’s most insightful psalms were written by the descendants of one of the Bible’s most blatant blasphemers.

Psalms 42-49, along with four other Psalms - 84-85 and 87-88 - were written either “*by*” or “*to*” the “**sons of Korah.**” To me it’s proof that no one is a slave to a sinful heritage. In Christ we all can change our destiny.

The preface to **PSALM FORTY-TWO** reads, “**To the Chief Musician. A Contemplation of the sons of Korah.**” That narrows it down to a family, but what were the circumstances of the individual who penned this psalm?

Apparently the author was a Levite far from home and away from the Temple. From clues in the psalm we glean he was in the Golan Heights – the remote, mountain region in northern Israel - near the headwaters of the Jordan. There, he desperately misses the Temple worship, and the presence of God. Nothing satisfies him apart from the Lord alone.

In verse 1 he says, “**As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.**”

On occasion our kids would forget to feed the dog. The poor pooch went all day with no water. At night when we finally filled her bowl she wouldn’t take a measured sip. She’d lap and gulp and gulp and lap.

This is how the psalmist longs for God. As a deer pines for

the brook – as a thirsty dog craves a bowl of water – the psalmist thirsts for God.

Actually, every human heart thirsts for God! Of course, until a person finds God, he or she doesn't realize it was for God that they hungered.

Infants are born with a rooting reflex. Their little mouth roots for the nipple. When they're hungry they'll suck on whatever is within reach.

Spiritually speaking, all humans have a rooting reflex. They'll suck on anything that promises satisfaction... sex, drugs, fame, success...

St. Augustine sums us up in his prayer, "You have formed us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You."

Another quote explains our hunger... "The soul of man is made with sweet tastes and only God Himself is rich enough to delight it."

Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst." Jesus can quench our thirst. But he waits to be wanted.

In OT times God's presence was revealed in the Temple. The psalmist is on the road – away from the sanctuary - so he asks in verse 2, "When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually say to me, "Where is your God?"

Once the pastor met with a committee of stubborn church

members to discuss some changes he wanted to make. They shot down all his ideas. But the pastor got the last laugh. In the minutes of the meeting he listed the members present... Then he listed the one that was absent, "God."

Have you ever felt that God was absent from your life? You no longer sensed His presence or felt His power. God seemed distant?

Verse 4 "When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast."

OT worship was **accentuated** by the *sights of the Temple*, the *aroma of the sacrifices*, the *excitement of the feasts*. Worship was a multi-sensory experience. You could see, and smell, and stroke the glory of God.

But ultimately OT worship was **limited** by the Temple. Worship was chained to a place and time. You had to be at the Temple.

Like a hot-air balloon setting sail, Jesus cut the ties to the Temple.

True worshippers now worship in spirit and truth. Worship is no longer a *sensory experience*, but a *spiritual experience*. We are the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Today, the Holy of Holies is the heart of a true believer.

Verse 5 "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?" He answers his own question... "Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of

His countenance.

O my God, my soul is cast down within me; therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, and from the heights of Hermon, from the Hill Mizar.” The psalmist is in the Golan - the ancient region of the tribe of Dan. “Jor” means “to descend.” The “Jor-dan” River “descends from Dan.”

The Jordan forms north of the Sea of Galilee, near the base of Mount Hermon. Three tributaries merge - the *Hashbani*, the *Banais*, the *Dan*.

The Golan is a remote area even today. In fact, on our tours to Israel we always stop at Banais. The NT refers to the area as Caesarea Philippi. Apparently, this is where the psalmist was when he wrote Psalm 42.

Just below the main sight at Banais there’s a waterfall. It involves a hike down a flight of stairs, but it’s a must see. I believe it inspired verse 7...

“Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; all Your waves and billows have gone over me.” The psalmist compares the spray of the waterfall to the presence of God – the roar of the crashing water to God’s voice. It’s pretty cool to be on location there to actually feel it and hear it...

“The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me - a prayer to the God of my life.

I will say to God my Rock, "Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" Perhaps the psalmist was on the run. He was in the

mountains hiding out from his enemy.

“As with a breaking of my bones, my enemies reproach me, while they say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” 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.”

PSALM FORTY-THREE was probably a continuation of Psalm 42.

“Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man! For You are the God of my strength; why do You cast me off? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle.”

He longs for God to return him to his place at the Temple in Jerusalem.

“Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and on the harp I will praise You, O God, my God.” When this wanderer ends his exile and finally gets home the first thing he promises to do is *not feed the dog, or check the mail, or mow the lawn...* but to take his guitar down to the Temple – set up right next to the altar – and praise God’s faithfulness.

He hungers for the presence of God.

“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?” Notice this is a reference to the previous psalm. “Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God.”

PSALM FORTY-FOUR is also “a contemplation of the sons of Korah.”

I always thought “Sons of Korah” would be a cool name for a Christian band. I noticed this past week a group from Australia took the suggestion.

Chapter 44 begins “We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, the deeds You did in their days, in days of old...”

Remember the psalms were written 2500 years before Guttenberg invented the printing press. The Jewish scribes carefully recorded the Psalms on sacred scrolls – but the public passed them along orally.

Here the psalmist recounts what he’s heard with his ears.

Which brings up a great question - *if all our kids knew of God is what they’ve heard from our lips, how much would they know?* Do we talk of God, and the deeds He’s done - both “in our days, and in days of old”?

Verse 2 “You drove out the nations with Your hand, but them You planted; You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out.

For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You favored them.”

The conquest of Canaan involved drawn swords, and spilt blood, and brave men - but the victory came from God. Here the psalmist gives credit where credit is due. It’s sad, but over

time we tend to downplay God's intervention in our battles...
May God forgive our *selective amnesia!*

“You are my King, O God; command victories for Jacob.” I love the next line, “Through You we will push down our enemies; through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us.” God supplies the needed push.

The source of past victories is God. He's also the key to future victories.

Verse 6 “I will not trust in my bow, nor shall my sword save me. But You have saved us from our enemies, and have put to shame those who hated us. In God we boast all day long, and praise Your name forever. Selah

“But You have cast us off and put us to shame, and You do not go out with our armies. You make us turn back from the enemy, and those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves. You have given us up like sheep intended for food, and have scattered us among the nations.

You sell Your people for next to nothing, and are not enriched by selling them. You make us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to those all around us. You make us a byword among the nations, a shaking of the head among the peoples.” God had brought judgment to Israel.

Psalm 44 is thought to have been written during the days of King Hezekiah. The Assyrian General Sennacherib had just conquered the northern 10 tribes of Israel, and had laid siege to the city of Jerusalem.

Sennacherib sent propagandists to speak to Jerusalem in

Hebrew.

They mocked Hezekiah and his God. The strategy was to strike fear in the hearts of Israel and intimidate them into a surrender with no battle.

The psalmist continues, “My dishonor is continually before me, and the shame of my face has covered me, because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, because of the enemy and the avenger.

What was confusing to the psalmist is that this challenge had come on the heels of a revival. Hezekiah, and his friend Isaiah, had instituted a series of reforms to renew the nation’s faith and return them to God.

The psalmist expresses his frustration. “All this has come upon us; but we have not forgotten You, nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant. Our heart has not turned back, nor have our steps departed from Your way; but You have severely broken us in the place of jackels, and covered us with the shadow of death. If we had forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a foreign god, would not God search this out?

For He knows the secrets of the heart.

The psalmist is confused. If the nation had sinned he could interpret the invasion as God’s judgment. But the enemy didn’t show up until after they’d turned their hearts to God. *Why were they suffering now?*

I hear the same complaint at times from new Christians. *“When I got saved my life got harder, not easier. I encountered new problems.”*

Hey, when you're on the devil's side why would he waste time attacking someone he's already got? Opposition doesn't arise until we decide to follow Jesus. We come under attack when we become a threat.

Notice what the psalmist says in verse 22, **“Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”**

Paul quotes this verse in Romans 8:36. The Apostle recalls all he had suffered for Jesus' sake. His Christian life is not a bed of roses. Being a Christian includes persecution. It's part of a Christian's discipleship.

“Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord? Arise! Do not cast us off forever. Why do You hide Your face, and forget our affliction and our oppression?”

For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our body clings to the ground. Arise for our help, and redeem us for Your mercies' sake.”

The psalmist saw the presence of trouble as a sign of God's absence. But not so! Verses 25-26 tell us God allows opposition for two reasons: *it reminds us of our helplessness and it drives us to God for help.*

In the long run, **battles are blessings.**

PSALM FORTY-FIVE is a love song set to the tune **“The Lillies.”**

It may've been a wedding song composed for a royal wedding. It speaks of the king and his bride. The identity of the kingly couple is unknown. It may've been David and

Michal – or Solomon and the Shulamite – or Hezekiah and Hepzibah, the daughter of Isaiah.

We know for sure it speaks of Christ and His Bride, the Church.

Verse 1 “My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever. Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty.”

“And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; and Your right hand shall teach You awesome things.

Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; the peoples fall under You.” He’s victor and sovereign. “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”

Notice this king is a happy man. God anoints Him with “**the oil of gladness.**” I recoil whenever Jesus is portrayed as sad and solemn.

I believe Jesus usually had a grin on His face. He was *the glad man*.

He smiled and laughed - *a lot*. When I open my eyes for the

first time in heaven I expect to see Jesus smiling at me with a huge grin.

He continues to describe the king, “All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad. Kings' daughters are among Your honorable women; at Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir.” The queen comes into view – and the *queen* is wearing her *bling* - “gold from Ophir.”

Here’s what’s happening, the queen is about to enter the honeymoon chamber – but first she’s told how to prepare herself for the special night.

Today when a girl prepares for her wedding night she soaks in the tub, and hits the salon for a manicure, pedicure, and up-do. She’s moisturized and accessorized. *She spends as much of dad’s money as possible.*

But for this bride the preparation is mental. She prepares relationally. The most important sex organ for both men and women is their brain. Sexual intimacy in marriage is more about *attitude* than *anatomy*.

She’s told, “Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your own people also, and your father's house...”

Here’s what makes a great lover – four words: **listen**, **consider**, **incline**, and **forget**.

First, the queen listens rather than talks... **Second**, she considers the king. She thinks of His needs. She focuses on him not her herself...

Third, she inclines - or leans and stretches out her soul

toward him...

And **fourth**, she forgets home – her past. She stays in the present. The queen has the ability to put the past behind her – and live in the moment.

Verse 11 assures the queen of her husband's love. "So the King will greatly desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, worship Him."

Notice the connection here between *sexuality* and *spirituality*. *Sexual intimacy in marriage* is analogous to *spiritual intimacy in worship*.

I do believe what makes a *good lover* also makes a *good worshipper*... Remember those four words – **listen**, **consider**, **incline**, and **forget**...

When we worship we need to **listen** not just talk. Be attentive and don't get distracted or sidetracked. How often do we allow annoyances to break our concentration? John Donne once said, "I neglect God and his angels for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a coach, for the whining of a door."

We should **consider**. Focus on God's character – not just our needs.

Then **incline** or stretch out our soul to God. Reach out spiritually.

Finally, **forget** the past. Stay in the moment. As Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward the mark..."

Verse 12, "And the daughter of Tyre will come with a gift; the

rich among the people will seek your favor. The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; her clothing is woven with gold.

She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; the virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; they shall enter the King's palace.”

Just before He ascended to heaven Jesus told His disciples He'd go and prepare a place for us. This was Jewish custom. After the betrothal, the husband went home to prepare an abode for his bride. When it was complete he returned for the “*home-taking*.” **For us that's the rapture!**

Today, Jesus is in heaven, but when our heavenly home is complete He's promised to return and take us to live with Him forever.

Perhaps this is the day Psalm 45 envisions. “**With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; they shall enter the King's palace.**”

Verse 16 “**Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons, whom You shall make princes in all the earth. I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore the people shall praise You forever and ever.**”

The preface to **PSALM FORTY-SIX** calls it “**A Song for Alamo.**”

The word “**Alamo**” probably means, “*high pitched*.” Perhaps it was a song for the sopranos. Not the gangsters, but the sisters in the choir.

Most commentators agree Psalms 46-48 were written at the time of the Assyrian assault on Jerusalem. Assyria was a rising empire bent on world conquest. They'd overthrown Syria and Israel, and were headed to Egypt.

Only Jerusalem, and the Jewish king, Hezekiah, stood in their way.

When Hezekiah looked over the walls he saw the meanest troops on the planet camped against him. But he prayed, and God answered.

A battle Angel came in the night and slaughtered 185,000 Assyrian troops. The next morning Hezekiah surveyed the carnage. He took out a pen, and either he or one of the sons of Korah wrote of God's deliverance.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...” The Hebrew word translated **“trouble”** means **“a tight spot.”**

Tonight, you may be in a tight spot, but God is able to deliver.

I love Psalm 46! Here's an outline... In **verses 1-3, God is a refuge.** In **verses 4-7, God is a river.** And in **verses 8-11, God is the ruler.**

The psalm begins, **“God is our refuge...”** He's a place of protection from the storm. And life is full of storms. Like a flood life can swirl out of control. Situations can overwhelm us. It's been said, **“Life is like fighting a gorilla. You don't rest when you get tired. You rest when the gorilla gets tired.”**

Yet God is a **“refuge”** - **“a very present help in trouble.”** The

expression means “easily accessible.” Going to God doesn’t involve a lot of red tape.

My daughter use to be a cheerleader – *the best there ever was, by the way.* Now she coaches cheerleaders. And I had a favorite cheer...

It goes like this, "Rain can't rock this house, thunder can't rock this house, lightning can't rock this house, and you can't rock this house."

This is what the psalmist says about God in Psalm 46. Bring on the storm – it doesn’t matter - God is what we need, when we need Him.

“Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed...” A literal translation would read - “though the land changes hands.”

Recall the context, invaders sit just outside the city gates. The psalmist is envisioning a worse-case-scenario. Even if the city is sacked God will still be faithful to His people. His plans will not fail.

“Though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah” Though Mother Nature goes berserk God the Father will be faithful.

Add to the psalmist’s list... *though the economy tanks, though I lose my job, though my teenager rebels...* God is still a **refuge** and I will not fear!

Real faith is not “if faith,” but “though faith.” It’s not I’ll trust God if He makes my life safe and easy. It’s I’ll trust God

though hard times come.

God is a refuge, but He's also a **river**. Verse 4, **"There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High."** In preparation of a siege against his capitol city, King Hezekiah had moved to secure Jerusalem's water supply. The Gihon Spring bubbles up southeast of the city - just outside Jerusalem's walls.

Hezekiah built a 1,777 foot tunnel to channel the spring inside the city.

The tunnel was an amazing feat of ancient engineering, but it was also a picture of Judah's relationship with God. Verse 5, **"God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved..."** As the Gihon supplied the city with water - God was a source of supernatural strength to the Jews.

I love verse 5, **"God is in the midst..."** God is always in the midst of whatever I'm in the middle of... He's not afraid to dive into my mess.

John Phillips writes, **"We see Jesus... in the midst of the upper room after His resurrection - in the midst of the lamp stands, walking among the churches in Revelation. He's always *"in the midst"*. He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name there I am in the midst of them."**

This is the Christmas message. The world was stained by sin, but Jesus doesn't take us out of it, instead He joins our muck and mire.

"God shall help her, just at the break of dawn." In ancient

times armies always attacked at “the break of dawn” - at first light. But God was ready.

“The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah” Sennacherib, the Assyrian king had not counted on God being in the city. Here we’re told “the LORD of hosts is with us.”

In Hebrew the expression “God with us” is the Christmas title for Jesus, “Immanuel.” In fact, Hezekiah’s contemporary Isaiah predicted, “The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (7:14)

In Isaiah 8:8 the prophet predicts Immanuel will defeat the invaders.

And indeed He did! Three times in the OT we’re told the Angel of the Lord came at night and slaughtered 185,000 Assyrian troops. The remainder of Sennacherib’s army fled and returned to Assyria.

Here’s what folks don’t know about Christmas. The infant in the manger was Hezekiah’s deliverer, Immanuel! Mary’s baby had been to battle.

Verse 8, “Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has made desolations in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” He’s a refuge, a river, and a ruler!

Our God rules over nations, He also rules over the troubles

we face.

“Be still, and know that I am God...” Fear grows in the noise of this world. Listen to the noise and you’re destined for confusion. *Skeptical friends, sensationalistic media, doubting voices* – cause fear to grow.

Only when we come to the quiet, and let God speak, does faith grow.

"The more we train ourselves to spend time with God and alone, the more we discover that God is with us at all times and in all places."

“The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah”

PSALM FORTY-SEVEN is probably a sequel to Psalm 46. It is interesting though, Psalm 47 is sung seven times in the Jewish synagogue prior to the blowing of the trumpet on Rosh Hashanah. The Feast Trumpets foreshadows the rapture. There may be hints of it here.

“Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.” When the Assyrian diplomat introduced Sennacherib to King Hezekiah, he called him "the great king" - it was an intimidating title.

Here, the psalmist calls the Hebrew God "the great King over all earth."

“He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet.” The NT says Jesus will one day put all things under

His feet!

“He will choose our inheritance for us, the excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah” The word “excellence” means “pride.” The rebellious Jews were God's pride and joy. It's amazing how God is so gracious.

“God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding.

God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne. The princes of the people have gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is greatly exalted.”

PSALM FORTY-EIGHT “a song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.”

“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain.” God lays claim to two cities. His earthly capitol is Jerusalem. His heavenly capitol is heaven or the New Jerusalem.

The subject of Psalm 48 is both the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem.

“Beautiful in elevation...” Jerusalem is 2500 feet ASL. The Dead Sea is 1290 feet BSL. That means the city towers 4000' above the Jordan Valley.

Jerusalem was also built on five mountains... Zion to the

south - **Moriah** at its heart - **Scopus** to the north - **Olivet** to the east - **Ophel** to the west...

On the east Jerusalem's walls rise even further above the Kidron Valley below. It makes for the most magnificent skyline of any city on earth.

“Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth...” It's the lifelong ambition of every Jew to make pilgrimage and see the holy city.

“Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.”

North of Zion was Moriah – the threshing floor where Solomon built the Temple. Further north, and up the hill was the sight Abraham offered Isaac, and Jesus was crucified.

The holiest sights were on **“the sides of the north.”** It's interesting that in ancient religions the home of the gods is located in the north.

Isaiah 14:13 says when Lucifer tried to rebel against God he exalted himself to the **“sides of the north.”** Job 37:22 and Psalm 75:6 refer to God as residing in the north. The Bible indicates heaven may be in the north.

“God is in her palaces; He is known as her refuge.” Jerusalem was invincible not because of elevation or walls, but God resided there.

“For behold, the kings assembled, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, they hastened away.

Fear took hold of them there, and pain, as of a woman in

birth pangs, as when you break the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it forever. Selah”

“We have thought, O God, on Your lovingkindness, in the midst of Your temple. According to Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Your judgments.

Walk about Zion, and go all around her.” Last December on our trip to Jerusalem we obeyed verse 12. We had a walk-about Jerusalem. We walked on top of the walls - from the Joppa Gate to the Lions Gate.

“Count her towers; mark well her bulwarks; consider her palaces; that you may tell it to the generation following. For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death.” God in heaven loves the people in every city on Earth, but He has a special love for Jerusalem.

PSALM FORTY-NINE is similar to Psalm 37. It seeks to answer the question, “How should the righteous react when the wicked prosper?”

Verse 1 “Hear this, all peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall give understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb; I

will disclose my dark saying on the harp. Why should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity at my heels surrounds me?

Those who trust in their wealth and boast in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him..." Money can buy lots of stuff, but no amount of money in the world can purchase God's forgiveness. There's no government bailout for sin. Forgiveness is never for sale.

Verse 8 "For the redemption of their souls is costly, and it shall cease forever - that he should continue to live eternally, and not see the Pit."

In the Middle Ages a corrupt Catholic church sold indulgences. For a price you could buy a get-out-of-hell free card. I once had a drunk offer me money. He was trying to buy his forgiveness. I refused to take it.

God doesn't want your money - He wants you!

"For he sees wise men die; likewise the fool and the senseless person perish, and leave their wealth to others." Money won't buy a second of life.

Their inner thought is that their houses will last forever, their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.

Nevertheless man, though in honor, does not remain; He is like the beasts that perish." A man names a ranch or estate after himself. It bears his name for generations, but he goes the way of all men.

It's better to have your name written in the Book of life.

“This is the way of those who are foolish, and of their posterity who approve their sayings. Selah Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them...” A rich man’s body rots like an animal’s corpse.

“The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling.

But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me. Selah Do not be afraid when one becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dies he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.”

You’ll never see a hearse pull a U-Haul. You can’t take it with you. *But you can send it ahead.* Invest spiritually and you’ll reap an eternal return.

Verse 18 “Though while he lives he blesses himself (For men will praise you when you do well for yourself), (you’ll be praised on earth, yet) he shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts that perish.”