



Jesus and the Psalms

Advent Study

Lesson 1

Read: Luke 24:13–27

Introduction

The Psalms are most frequently associated with the greatest king in Israel's history, David. The truth is, David was one of a number of writers contributing to this collection of spiritual poems. Other authors include Moses (Psalm 90), Solomon, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and others known and unknown.

The Hebrew title for the Psalter is *cipher tehillim*, “book of praises.” The word “praise” appears over 200 times in the 150 psalms. For example, David wrote, “I will praise you, O LORD (Yahweh), with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High” (Psalm 9:1-2).

This study of Psalms will focus on an often overlooked aspect of the *cipher tehillim*: the psalms as a window into the life of Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah. What can we learn about Jesus from a book written hundreds, even thousands of years before his birth? We can learn much indeed!

After his resurrection, while speaking with two disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus made it explicitly clear that the Psalms contain prophetic revelation into his life and ministry. He told the two disciples, “Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms” (v.44).

I invite you to join me as we search for nuggets of truth about Yeshua HaMashiach through the window of the Psalms.

R&D God Almighty knows the end from the beginning. Do you and I have anything to fear when we consider that our omnipotent Father watches over us?

Prayer: Father, teach us more about Your Son as we study the Book of Praises. “Sanctify us through the truth, Your word is truth” (John 17:17).

Lesson 2

Read: Psalm 2:1-6

Yeshua and Torah

In this study I will often use Jesus' Hebrew name, “Yeshua,” to better connect us with our Hebraic roots. The meaning of his name, “Yahweh is salvation,” is a revelation of his person and mission. He came to save us from our sins.

I will also be using the Hebrew personal name of God Almighty, “Yahweh,” in place of the title “LORD” that Bible translators traditionally choose in place of His name. He is “LORD,” but He wants us to relate to Him on a personal level. Hence, He has given Himself the personal name “Yahweh.”

Psalm 2 contains a wealth of information regarding Yahweh and Yeshua, the Messiah. Verses 1-3 pose an ironic question: “Why do the nations conspire against Yahweh and His Mashiach (Messiah)?” There is a supernatural enmity between Yahweh and His fallen creation. The world longs to be free of Torah (Yahweh’s divine plan for human life) in order to carnally indulge itself without the guilt of a convicted conscience. Nothing could be more futile or self-destructive. The end result of this rebellion is to face the wrath of the Almighty (vv.4-5).

On the other hand, those who embrace the conviction that comes through examining their lives in the light of Torah will be blessed beyond measure. Paul writes, “The *Torah* was put in charge to lead us to *Messiah* that we might be justified by faith” (Galatians 3:24). In other words, Torah was given to reveal our need for salvation and then lead us to the source of salvation, Yeshua, our Messiah and savior.

R&D Have you embraced the Torah (the law of God) as a friend leading you to Yeshua? Are you convicted and cannot find relief? Turn to Jesus. He is the only one who can set you free.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am convicted by the way I am living my life. I accept the free gift of your saving grace. Come into my life and help me live according to your Torah (divine plan).

Lesson 3

Read: Psalm 2:7-12

Kiss the Son

The Psalmist is inspired by the Spirit of God to record a conversation between the coming Messiah-King (Yeshua) and Yahweh. It begins with an exclamation that we can understand from a post-resurrection perspective but that must have been perplexing to the writer. Yahweh identifies Yeshua as his begotten son. Paul connects this verse (v.7) with Jesus’ resurrection (Acts 13:32-34). The point is, Yeshua was/is the son of Yahweh and the proof of his son-ship is the fact that Yahweh raised him from the dead after his crucifixion.

The Psalmist then reveals that Yahweh’s son will inherit the nations and rule with absolute authority. Yeshua is King of kings and Lord of lords. He will return to reign over his eternal kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth.

The Psalmist then issues a warning to the kings and rulers of this world: “Serve the Lord with fear.” This does not mean to be afraid of Him; it means to obey Him out of reverential trust. The Psalmist then writes, “kiss the son,” which in that culture meant to pay homage to the son (the Messiah-King). This kiss would be a kiss of subjection and reverence.

Paul wrote to the Philippians, “at the name of *Yeshua* every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (2:10-11). We have been given the opportunity to “kiss the Son” as our personal Lord and Savior, or, we can wait and bow to him as our righteous judge. Faith in the Son leads to the pardoning of our sins and eternal life as children of God; waiting leads to standing before a holy, righteous judge as unrighteous men and women without any remedy for our sins.

R&D Have you “kissed the Son”? Have you accepted the free gift of salvation by grace through faith in the only begotten Son of God? If not, I invite you turn to him right now and receive grace that will transform your life.

Prayer: *Jesus, I confess my sin. I have rebelled against you and your will for my life. I want to “take refuge” (v.12) in you and become a child of God Almighty. Thank you for your love and mercy.*

Lesson 4

Read: Psalm 9:1-10

Yeshua, our Refuge

The Psalmist begins with an exclamation of praise and gratitude: “I will praise you with all my heart. I will be glad and rejoice in you” (vv.1-2). This praise is directed to Yahweh, the Lord of Israel. And, because Yeshua is the son of Yahweh, it is directed to him as well. Jesus said, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me” (John 14:9-10). All praise to Yahweh is praise to His Son; they cannot be separated!

In verses 7 and 8 the Psalmist exalts Yahweh as the righteous King, Judge, and Governor. His throne and His kingdom are established forever. There is no threat to His reign. When people give their lives to Him, there is nothing on earth or in heaven that can threaten His ability to watch over them. As Paul wrote, “nothing can separate them from His love” (Romans 8:38-39).

In verses 9 and 10, the Psalmist writes that Yahweh is a refuge and stronghold. He will never forsake anyone who seeks Him. A refuge or stronghold is a place of absolute security: a place of safety and peace. When anyone trusts in Jesus the Messiah as Lord and Savior, he is their refuge, their stronghold. Paul wrote, “God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms *in Christ Jesus*” (Ephesians 2:6). In another place he wrote, “you died, and your life is now *hidden with Christ in God*” (Colossians 3:3). Salvation through faith *in Jesus the Messiah* is all about having him as our refuge, our stronghold. We are absolutely secure, safe, and at peace, not because of our worthiness, but because he is worthy and our lives are hidden in him.

R&D *Is your life “hidden in Jesus Christ”? Is he your refuge and stronghold? If not, turn to him and ask him to be your refuge and stronghold today.*

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I have trusted in other places of refuge that have failed me over and over again. I ask you to come into my life so that my life will be hidden safely and securely in you.*

Lesson 5

Read: Palm 13

The “Checed” (unfailing love) of Yeshua

David was a man “after God’s own heart,” but he was also a man familiar with the challenges and vicissitudes of life. There were times of great triumph and there were times of failure. David defeated the mighty giant, Goliath, but fell in defeat to the lust for Uriah’s wife, Bathsheba. The implications of his tryst with the wife of one of his great warriors stayed with him for the rest of his life.

In this Psalm, David laments, “How long, Oh Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?” (v.1). Who of us cannot relate to this cry of desperation? Who has not sensed being all alone in the midst of a personal struggle? Where is the Lord when we need Him the most?

David then turns his eyes away from his desperation and, in faith, proclaims, “But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.” The Hebrew word for “unfailing love”

is *cheched* (*hess-ed*). In addition to unfailing love, it can be translated “loving kindness,” “steadfast love,” or “mercy.” Jesus is full of *cheched*. He understands the trials and tribulations of life because he lived as a man. Therefore, when we are faced with a sense of desperation, we can do as David did: we can turn away from our desperation and turn to Jesus in full assurance of receiving his *cheched*.

R&D Are you facing circumstances that cause you to say, “How long, Oh Lord? Will you forget me forever?” If so, turn from your circumstances to Jesus, the one whose steadfast love will sustain and bless you.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, I am facing challenges that seem too much for me. I trust in your faithfulness and love. I turn from my concerns to seek your love and grace. Thank you for your saving grace.

Lesson 6

Read: Psalm 16

Jesus the Holy One

In this Psalm, the Spirit of God inspires David to write prophetic words giving us insight into how Yeshua was able to face the ordeal of his passion and death. Can you imagine a faith and trust so powerful that it enabled him to commit himself to do what he had to do and face what he had to face?

In verse 8, David writes, “I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.” When Yeshua faced his passion, his eyes were on Yahweh, his Father. He knew that his Father was right there with him. Nothing could shake his faith and trust.

David then writes, “Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay” (vv.9-10). Even in the face of death, Yeshua believed without question that he would rise on the third day and return to his Father’s right hand. The path of life for Yeshua the Messiah was death on the cross. But he knew that his death would lead to joy unspeakable in the presence of his beloved Father seated in heavenly glory. And he knew that his death was the only way the world he loved could be saved from its sin.

R&D Do you realize that the love our Father has for His only begotten Son is the love He has for you? He did not forsake Jesus, and He will not forsake you!

Prayer: Father, thank You for the assurance we receive from the Psalms. Thank You for Your promises to never leave or forsake us. Continue giving us the faith we need to face the trials of our lives.

Lesson 7

Read: Psalm 20

Protected by Hashem (The Name)

David writes, “May the name (hashem) of the God of Jacob protect you.” The name of the God of Jacob is Yahweh (there are other possible transliterations of the Hebrew). Jesus’ name in Hebrew is Yeshua and means “Yahweh is salvation.” Jesus is the son of Yahweh; therefore the verse could be written, “May the name of the God of Jacob, Yahweh or Yeshua, protect you.”

The idea of being protected by a name is somewhat foreign to Western culture. A biblical understanding of the concept reveals how we are protected by a name. When Scripture states that we are protected or saved by the name *Yahweh* or *Yeshua*, it means we are protected or saved by Him and what His name reveals about Himself. The meaning of names is not accidental. The meaning represents a revelation into the character of the person or some aspect of the person's life.

The name Yeshua, "Yahweh is salvation," reveals that Yeshua, the son of Yahweh, is the source of salvation. This was confirmed by the Lord when He appeared in a dream to Joseph: "You are to give him the name Yeshua, *because* he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Paul gives us additional insight into how we are protected by the name of Yeshua. He writes, "you (Christians) died, and your life is now hidden with Messiah in God." Believers are "in Messiah" and protected through this personal, eternal relationship instituted by God Almighty Himself.

R&D When your life is "hidden in Messiah Jesus," you have an invulnerable, eternal relationship with Almighty God that guarantees His constant and unending love.

Prayer: Dear Father, thank You that my life is hidden in Jesus. Thank You for the assurance I have through my faith in Your beloved son.

Lesson 8

Read: Psalm 22

A Psalm from Golgotha I

David wrote Psalm 22 one thousand years before the death of Yeshua on the cross. It is a remarkable window into the soul of the suffering savior of the world. According to Matthew and Mark, Yeshua quoted this psalm as he hung on the cross at Golgotha. Mark wrote, "At the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?'"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34).

At first glance, it would appear that Yeshua was in desperation, believing that God Almighty, his Father, had forsaken him. I would suggest that when he cried out it was not just an act of desperation but a premeditated quote from Psalm 22 intended to connect his passion with what David had written one thousand years earlier.

This was the dark night of the soul of the Son of God. For the first time in eternity past, he felt forsaken by Yahweh. As Paul wrote, he had become sin (2 Corinthians 5:21); he was made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). The light of the countenance of his Father faded into the darkness of what was laid upon the sinless Lamb of God.

But, as Paul Harvey might say, that is not the end of the story. As we read all of Psalm 22 we discover "the rest of the story." After crying out, Yeshua's faith begins to shatter the darkness of the hour. David writes, "Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel. In you, our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed" (v.3-5). In the midst of his ordeal, Yeshua reminds himself of the faithfulness of his Father. The light of truth begins to relieve the agony of despair as the Son fulfills his destiny to redeem the world.

R&D Are you experiencing a dark night of the soul? If so, read Psalm 22 and turn to the one who understands what you are going through. Come boldly to "the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16) to receive the comfort and strength you need.

Prayer: Dear Lord, my world, at times, seems so dark. Shine the light of Your grace and mercy upon me. Deliver me and I will give You all the praise and glory. In faith I pray in Jesus' name.

Lesson 9

Read: Psalm 22

A Psalm from Golgotha II

Psalm 22 is an astonishing example of the omniscient power of Almighty God. How is it possible for David to write a detailed description of what would happen at Golgotha a thousand years before it took place? What are the implications for those who trust in Jesus as their Messiah and Lord?

As Jesus went through his passion, he was scorned, despised, and insulted. The chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders mocked him saying, "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him" (v.8). If that were not convincing enough, David added, "they have pierced my hands and my feet...they divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing" (vv.16, 18). Israel's greatest king may not have realized the full significance of what he wrote, but God Almighty knew that one day His people would read, understand, and be amazed at what the Spirit of God had revealed to David.

The implications for us are profound. We can be reassured in the face of life's many challenges that our Father in heaven knows the end from the beginning of each of our lives. He knows the dark nights of our souls we will face before our conception, and He is more than able to give us the grace and help we need to enable us to overcome whatever we may face. He sustained His beloved Son through Golgotha, and He will sustain us through every challenge we face in this life.

R&D Have you meditated on the truth that God Almighty knows every aspect of your life? Do you trust that He will give you the grace you need to overcome your challenges?

Prayer: Father, I stand in awe of Your omniscient power. I thank You for loving me and for Your promise to never leave or forsake me. I trust that You will help me through every challenge I face. In Jesus' name I pray.

Lesson 10

Read: Psalm 23

Jesus is My Shepherd

The 23rd Psalm is unquestionably the most beloved of all the Psalms. David wrote it from the perspective of an experienced shepherd. He knew that being a shepherd required a full commitment to the well-being of the sheep. David used his background as a shepherd to convince King Saul that he should fight Goliath. He said, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear" (1 Samuel 17:34-36). David had risked his life to protect his sheep!

Yeshua, "the great shepherd of the sheep," (Hebrews 13:20) not only risked his life for the sake of his sheep, he gave his life so that we may truly live. He is the most committed shepherd who ever lived!

David describes how Yeshua looks after us. He makes sure we will never be in want by meeting “all our needs according to his riches in glory” (Philippians 4:19). He “restores our soul” (v.3) by filling us with the Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23). Yeshua removes the fear in life by giving us “a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7). And even when we come face to face with death, he promises to “never leave or forsake us” (Hebrews 13:5).

Yeshua is our loving shepherd. He gave us this wonderful promise: “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). And, when we leave this life, we will dwell *with him* “in the house of the LORD forever” (v.6).

R&D Have you considered Jesus as your Great Shepherd? He knows you by name and is watching over you. He will never leave or forsake you.

Prayer: Jesus, I believe you are the shepherd of the 23rd Psalm. Thank you for watching over me. Thank you for helping me triumph over the Goliaths in my life.

Lesson 11

Read: Psalm 24

Messiah: The King of Glory

One of the Church’s serious errors has been to disconnect itself from the chosen people and from the Promised Land. When Yeshua returns, he will return to Israel. He will return to the same Temple Mount he walked upon two thousand years ago. He will reign in his kingdom from the city of God, Jerusalem.

David wrote, “Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty—he is the King of glory” (vv.9-10). The gates, the ancient doors, are the gates leading to the Temple mount. When Yeshua returns, He will enter the East Gate and ascend to the Holy Temple as “the King of glory.” Then he will be seated as King of the kingdom of Almighty God.

Yeshua is able to do this because he is “strong and mighty” and because he won the battle against Satan, death, and the grave through his death, burial, and resurrection. His kingdom will have an elite group of citizens, those who “seek him who seek his face” (v.6). When David writes “seek his face,” he uses a biblical idiom that implies a desire to have a personal encounter with the one being sought. Messiah, King of glory, will reign over a kingdom of men and women who set apart their own personal desires for the sake of having a personal encounter with him.

R&D Have you considered that you are a citizen of the eternal kingdom of Almighty God? Jesus is the perfect king of the perfect kingdom and, when we trust in him, we enter this wonderful kingdom right now and forever.

Prayer: Jesus, I acknowledge that you are the King of glory. Thank you for the privilege of being a citizen of your wonderful kingdom. Help me to live this as a faithful citizen.

Lesson 12

Read: Psalm 27:1-6

Messiah, Our Stronghold

David, like all of us, struggled with sin. But he was a righteous man because of his willingness to face his sin and seek the loving kindness of Yahweh for forgiveness and mercy. He knew he could not save himself, and that no human stronghold could possibly keep him safe from a world that disdains righteousness and those who seek to live righteous lives. He acknowledges this in this Psalm: “Yahweh is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Yahweh is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?” (vv.1-2).

Then David writes one of the most important verses in all Scripture. It represents the highest priority of human life. It is the one thing that separates the godly from the ungodly. David writes, “One thing will I ask; this is what I seek” (v.4a). David, the mighty King of Israel, could have had anything, but this one thing was his ultimate desire. He wanted to dwell in the presence of Almighty God all the days of his life. David knew this was the place where he could encounter the God of his salvation. This was the one place in creation where he was safe from all his enemies (v.5). In his day, the presence of Almighty God was found in one place, the Tabernacle that had made its way from Mt. Horeb in the Sinai to Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem. This was the place where David encountered the *shekinah*: the glory of God.

Two thousand years ago, the living Tabernacle of Almighty God became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Today we are the Tabernacle or Temple of God through faith in the Son of God (2 Corinthians 6:16). Therefore, we can dwell in the house of God all the days of our lives.

R&D Have you considered how completely safe you are in Jesus? In him, nothing separates you from the love of God. In him, we can live our lives without fear in full assurance of his grace and love.

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for making the way for me to live in your kingdom both now and forever. You are my stronghold, my defense, and I will fear no enemies.

Lesson 13

Read: Psalm 37:1-6

Yeshua: The Source of Righteous Living

One of the great divides between the chosen people and those who believe Yeshua is the Messiah is a disagreement regarding Torah (translated as “law” in the New Covenant). Some believers postulate that the Torah does not apply to the Church, that it is somehow negative. But Jews cherish the Torah as a guide to righteous living. I would suggest that the Church has much to learn from our elder brothers and sisters regarding the nature and role of Torah in defining righteous living.

David writes, “Trust in Yahweh and do good” (v.3). Yeshua is Yahweh made flesh. We trust in Yeshua for his saving grace but often fail to recognize that we are called to “do good” by following the Torah as a result of our salvation. In verse 6, David writes that the LORD is the one who “brings forth” our righteousness. We are called to righteous living through faith in Yeshua who “brings forth” or enables our righteous living through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The standard for righteous living is found in the Torah (God Almighty’s divine plan for righteous living found in both the Hebrew Scriptures and New Covenant). It is time for the Church to rediscover the Torah as a divine guide to God Almighty’s plan for our lives. We, like our Jewish

brothers and sisters, should cherish the holy *Torah* and seek to live according to its standards, not according to our own, or our deteriorating culture's, fluctuating norms.

R&D Faith in Jesus is the one and only source of human salvation. And true faith in Jesus will always "bring forth righteousness" (v.6) in how we live our lives. Do you hunger for righteous living by reading and studying Torah?

Prayer: Abba Father, I hunger to live a righteous life according to Your standards. Teach me as I read Your word. Bring forth Your righteousness through me to the glory of the name of Jesus, Your Son and my Savior.

Lesson 14

Read: Psalm 40:1-10

The Obedient Messiah

In this Psalm, David peeks into the life of the righteous, obedient Son of Almighty God. On behalf of the coming Messiah he writes vicariously, "Here I am, I have come, it is written about me in the scroll. I (Messiah) desire to do your will, O my God; your *torah* is within my heart."

According to John, Yeshua was "the word made flesh" (John 1:14). He was uniquely both the son of man (the son of Mary) and the Son of God (conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit). No other human being ever born of a woman could make this claim. Unlike all other men, Yeshua's life was not driven and inspired by innate sin. The *Torah* (God Almighty's divine plan for healthy spiritual life) was written in the heart of His Son and enabled him to do the will of His Father no matter what the cost.

The author of Hebrews writes, "for the joy set before him *he* endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). What joy could this possibly be? It was the joy of obeying his Father perfectly, knowing by faith that His will was always the right path for his life. Because the *Torah* was written in Yeshua's heart, he knew that death on the cross would open the door of salvation to all who put their faith and trust in him. He knew that death and the grave could not keep him from "being seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

R&D Is the Spirit of God leading you to make a decision that may have painful consequences but in the end will lead to reaping the blessings of obedience? If so, consider what Jesus did for you, and you will receive grace to make the right decision.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I sense the Spirit of God leading me to (insert what you believe You are to do). Give me the grace to be obedient for the glory of Your holy name.

Lesson 15

Read: Psalm 44:1-8

Jesus the Victor

The world changed dramatically approximately 1500 years before the birth of Yeshua in the Promised Land. The event that brought about this dramatic change has consequences that directly affect our contemporary world. The event is known as the Exodus, an event that led to the establishment of the nation of Israel. At 12 midnight on May 14, 1948, in fulfillment of a prophecy

from Isaiah, Israel was reborn as an independent nation in a day, in a single moment (Isaiah 66:8-9) and is now the center of the world's attention.

The Psalmist writes of the Exodus and subsequent victories that led to the first birth of the nation of Israel. He writes, "It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm" (v.3). The "right hand" of Yahweh is a biblical Messianic metaphor referring to His Son, Yeshua. There are numerous references to him as the one who was raised from the dead and "exalted to the right hand of God" (Acts 2:33, Romans 8:34, etc.). When the Hebrew people were delivered from the bondage of slavery in Egypt, it was not done by their power but by "the right hand" of God. The pre-incarnate Son of God was sent by his Father to deliver the chosen people. Paul suggests this when he writes, "They (the Hebrew people) all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that *accompanied them*, and that rock was *Messiah*." (1 Corinthians 10:2-4)

The great spiritual victories in our lives are not the result of our own strength, but through the grace of the Spirit of God we have received then as a result of our faith in Yeshua as our Messiah.

R&D Are you fighting your spiritual battles with your own strength? If so, you are in for a tough battle. Turn to the one seated at "the right hand of God" and trust in him for your victory. When we do this, we are "more than conquerors" because of his power working in and through us.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I have been fighting and losing many spiritual battles. I give up the struggle and turn to you, trusting in your victory in and through me. In your mighty name I pray.

Lesson 16

Read: Psalm 51:1-12

Yeshua, the Compassionate One

David was Israel's greatest king and hero. The prophet Samuel described him as "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). In his youth, he defeated the giant Goliath and the Philistine army. As king, he won many battles against an array of enemies. He set the stage for Israel to become the most prominent nation on earth.

But the man who defeated Goliath with a sling and a stone, could not, as I wrote earlier, defeat the enemy of lust. In a moment of weakness, he had an adulterous affair with Bathsheba, the wife of another military hero, Uriah. Because David was king, he was immune from human intervention. At the same time, like all of us, he was not immune to divine intervention.

Yahweh responded by sending His prophet, Nathan, to confront David. To his credit, David responded with sincere repentance. He not only confessed privately to Nathan, but he wrote a public confession. This confession is Psalm 51.

David was able to do this because he knew Yahweh. He knew Yahweh was a God of "unfailing love" and "great compassion" (v.1). David knew that if he truly repented, Almighty God would "blot out *his* transgressions and cleanse *him* of *his* iniquity" (vv.1-2).

Yeshua is the embodiment of the divine compassion David wrote about in his Psalm. This was epitomized in the context of another act of adultery. A woman who was caught committing this terrible sin was brought to him. He responded compassionately by forgiving her, saying, "I do not condemn you...go and leave your life of sin."

The compassion of God Almighty is available to all who will own their sin, repent, and seek His forgiveness and grace. If He did this for David and the adulterous woman, He will do it for all of us.

R&D Are you struggling with accepting the forgiveness of Almighty God? Remember, He is the God of compassion who will accept your confession and repentance. He is always willing to forgive those with a “broken and contrite heart” (Psalm 51:17).

Prayer: Father, I confess (insert your own sin). I believe You are a God of compassion. Forgive me. Have mercy on me. Blot out my transgressions and wash away my iniquity.

Lesson 17

Read: Psalm 71:1-7

Yeshua, Our Hope and Confidence

David was Israel’s greatest king and hero. He won many incredible victories against an array of enemies. But each and every battle had the potential of defeat. Each and every battle required a renewed faith in the power of the Holy One of Israel to be victorious.

This emotional challenge is reflected in many of David’s Psalms. In today’s Psalm, he cries out, “Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of evil and cruel men” (v.4). At this point, he is moved by faith and writes, “you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth” (v.5). David turns his eyes away from his enemies and reminds himself that Yahweh is his hope and confidence, and that victory belongs to those who trust in Him.

Paul, quoting Isaiah, writes, “The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him” (Romans 15:12). Yeshua is Isaiah’s “Root of Jesse.” He is our “hope and confidence.” When we face any trial, temptation or even defeat, we can turn to him in hope and confidence that the victory will be ours. This victory is not because of our natural, human power, but because of his supernatural, divine power.

R&D Are you facing another battle against a seen or unseen enemy? Are you concerned about your strength to overcome this enemy? Put your hope and confidence in Yeshua. Victory will be yours through him.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I cry to You in the midst of my struggle. At the same time, I put my hope and confidence in You and Your power to bring me to victory. I praise You because You are worthy of my confidence. In Jesus’ name.

Lesson 18

Read: Psalm 91

Yeshua, the Lord of Hosts

Psalm 91 is one of the most cherished Psalms in the Psalter. The basic theme of this wonderful Psalm is the promise of protection for anyone who trusts in the Lord. The author writes, “I will say of Yahweh, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust’” (v.2). Every verse contains a promise of Yahweh’s protection or deliverance.

All of these promises are applicable to everyone who has trusted in the incarnation of the Son of Yahweh, Yeshua. One promise in particular alludes to one of the many titles given to the

Son of God. The author writes, “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways” (v.11). The title associated with this verse is Yeshua Sabaoth, Jesus the Lord of Hosts.

Almighty God realizes that we often are weak and in need of special assistance. This is when He sends His angels (hosts) to “guard us in all our ways.” Even Yeshua was assisted by angels after his forty-day fast and encounter with Satan in the wilderness (Matthew 4:11). The book of Hebrews provides additional insight into the ministry of angels. The author writes, “Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?” (Hebrews 1:14).

We do not call on angels for assistance, but we can call on the Lord of Hosts, Yeshua, asking for his help and, if needed, he will dispatch his angelic hosts to help us in ways he knows we need. How glorious it is to know that our Lord and Savior is also Lord of the heavenly hosts sent to “serve those who will inherit salvation.”

R&D Have you ever considered Jesus as “Lord of Hosts” and what that means to you? Think about extraordinary experiences in your life. Is it possible that these experiences were the result of an angelic encounter?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I rejoice that you are my Lord and Savior. I look to you to fulfill the promises of Psalm 91, including the promise to send your angels to “guard me in all my ways.”

Lesson 19

Read: Psalm 96

Yeshua, the Righteous Judge

The contemporary Western denominational church has succumbed, in large part, to the pervasive politically correct world view in which the love of Almighty God leaves no room for the concept of His being a righteous judge. This is not only erroneous, but it opens the door to an antinomian (lawless) attitude towards life. The contemporary church’s struggle with biblically mandated morality in the area of human sexuality exemplifies what can happen when people focus solely on the love of God without considering all other aspects of His character.

In today’s Psalm, the author writes, “Yahweh comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth” (v.13). John reveals that the Son of Yahweh will be the judge of the world. He writes, “*God Almighty* has given him (Jesus) authority to judge because he is the Son of Man” (John 5:27). Therefore there is a day coming when the loving Lord and Savior of the world will sit as judge. Those who put their faith and trust in him have nothing to fear. Those who do not believe face eternal condemnation (John 3:18).

The major theme of Psalm 96 is a call to worship the righteous judge. We worship him because he is not only our judge; he is also our Lord and Savior. When we stand before his judgment throne, we will stand before the judge who died for us so that we need not fear his judgment. We also stand before the righteous judge who gives us the Holy Spirit so that we can live holy, spirit-filled lives. This does not imply perfection but it does imply that we long to live according to his divine *Torah* (his plan for righteous living).

R&D Do you fear judgment? When you have given your life to Jesus, you have nothing to fear. He has done everything needed to guarantee pardon and exoneration from the eternal consequences of our sin.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I worship You as both my Lord and Savior and as my righteous judge. I look forward to standing before You because it will be a joy to praise You for having mercy on me.

Lesson 20

Read: Psalm 105:1-11

Yeshua and the Covenant with Israel

One of the most important attributes of Yahweh and the Son of Yahweh is an unflinching commitment to keep the covenants He has made with His chosen people. Today's Psalm is a summary of His covenantal relationship with Israel, beginning with Abraham and ending with entrance into the Promised Land.

Verse 11 summarizes an important covenantal promise Yahweh made with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). The promise is an "everlasting covenant" to "give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit" (v.11). Abraham received and believed this promise, but it would be over 400 years before it would be fulfilled.

At the divinely appointed time, the Lord chose a man, Moses, to deliver His people from Egyptian slavery and guide them on a forty-year journey that would ultimately lead to the fulfillment of His promise to give them the land of Canaan. This land was given to them "l'olam," a Hebrew word that means "forever." It has been their possession since Yahweh promised it to Abraham. Because of unfaithfulness, they have not always had dominion over the land, but it remains their land "l'olam."

Their modern-day return to the land is the fulfillment of multitudes of prophecies found in the Hebrew Scriptures. God Almighty has brought His people back and the day is drawing near when they will realize that Jesus is their Messiah (Zechariah 12:10).

What does this mean to you and me? If God Almighty is faithful to His Abrahamic covenant with a disobedient people (all people are disobedient, not just the chosen people), how much more faithful to the covenant He "cut" for the world through the sacrifice of his beloved Son, Yeshua?

R&D Are you ever concerned that your lack of faithfulness will separate you from Jesus? The God who has not forsaken His chosen people will never forsake you.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I confess I have been unfaithful. Forgive me and renew in me a desire to be obedient to Your will for my life. In Jesus' name.

Lesson 21

Read: Psalm 110

Yeshua, the Coming King

Have you seen cartoons characterizing an old man with a long white beard holding a sign that says, "The End is Near"? Many struggle with the idea of a final judgment and the end of the world as we know it today. If you believe the Bible is the word of Almighty God, there should be no struggle. The end is coming and a new world, a new kingdom, will be established.

In today's Psalm, David wrote about the King and his coming kingdom. He wrote, "Yahweh says to my Lord (Yeshua): 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'" (v.1). After his resurrection, Scripture says that Yeshua was seated at the right hand of his Father (Acts 2:32-33). He will remain there until the time comes to return as conquering king. At that time he will "rule," (v.2) "shatter kings" (v.5), and "judge the nations" (v.6). Yeshua will

establish his earthly kingdom and reign with absolute authority and power, eliminating all evil and ungodliness. This kingdom will be a glorious kingdom, a kingdom of “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17).

As in all earthly kingdoms, there are requirements for citizenship. In the case of the Kingdom of God there is one and only one way to become a citizen. Every person becomes a citizen by the grace of Yahweh through faith in the Son of Yahweh (Ephesians 2:8).

R&D The King is coming! Are you ready for his return? Do you anticipate how wonderful it will be when all darkness is removed and we will live each day in righteousness, joy, and peace?”

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I look forward to your coming kingdom on earth. Enable me by your Spirit to be fully prepared for your return.

Lesson 22

Read: Psalm 121

Yeshua, the Keeper of Israel

The eyes of the world are fixed on Israel. This tiny little nation, less than the size of the state of New Jersey, should not have survived more than a few days after its birth on May 14, 1948. On that date, five Arab Islamic nations attacked Israel with an overwhelming superiority of forces and equipment. But they did not realize that “he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep” (v.3-4).

The Church has a tendency to think of itself as the new Israel, and to think of Israel as a godforsaken people. Nothing could be further from the truth. Israel is “the apple of God’s eye.” Zechariah writes, “Whoever touches *Israel* touches the apple of *Yahweh*’s eye; I will surely raise my hand against them” (Zechariah 2:8-9).

The modern day restoration of the nation of Israel is in fulfillment of a multitude of biblical prophecies. And the modern day antipathy towards Israel is another fulfillment of biblical prophecy. The day is coming when nations will turn against the chosen people and their tiny nation. Armies will gather to destroy her, but “he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” The armies will ostensibly be victorious but, on the day of their apparent victory, Yeshua will stand on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem and destroy Israel’s foes (Zechariah 14:2-3).

You and I should take great solace in knowing that “he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” Yeshua is the God who watches over all his people, Jew and Gentile. There is no enemy in our lives that he cannot destroy.

R&D If Jesus is watching over Israel, do you believe he is watching over you? Think about it—the Son of Almighty God is watching over every aspect of your life. What then do you and I ever have to fear?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for watching over me. Each and every time I begin to fear, I will look to Israel and be reminded that you are faithful to all your promises of protection and grace. In your name I pray.

Lesson 23

Read: Psalm 128

The Fear of Yeshua and Yahweh's Blessing

The psalmist writes, "Blessed are all who fear *Yahweh*, who walk in his ways" (v.1). The idea of "fearing" the Lord seems to be contrary to all we have been taught about the love of God. But "fearing the Lord" does not mean being afraid of Him. To fear the Lord means to reverence Him and to seek to please Him by "walking in His ways."

John wrote, "This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world" (1 John 5:3-4). We have been given the Holy Spirit to enable us to "walk" (live) according to God Almighty's *Torah* (divine plan for "walking with Him"). This "walk" with God is often contrary to the way the world would encourage us to live our lives. This is particularly true in our politically correct, post-modern, post-Christian, multicultural secular world that rejects absolute truth and cannot accept that faith in Yeshua is the only way to salvation.

The contemporary Christian is faced with a dilemma. Do we "fear" (reverence) Yeshua and walk according to his ways, or do we acquiesce to the contemporary world and walk in its ways? If we want the blessings of Yahweh, we will reverence His Son and walk in His ways. There is no other way!

Paul wrote, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2). We renew our minds through the study of the Word of God. Through study and the power of the Holy Spirit we learn to "walk in his ways." Through a healthy "fear" of the Lord, we choose to live according to what we have learned.

R&D Are you struggling with walking with Jesus and his ways as opposed to walking according to the world's ways. If so, reverence Jesus by walking in his ways. He promises to give you his blessings when you do.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I confess that I have been walking too much according to the world's ways. I commit to reading your word to learn how to "walk in your ways," and I ask you to fill me with the Holy Spirit so that I can live according to what I learn. In your name I pray.

Lesson 24

Read: Psalm 139:1-6

Yeshua, the Omniscient One

When I was a child, I lived a life that caused my conscience to be in a state of turmoil. My problem was that I generally knew what my mother and father expected of me, but I also knew they did not always know whether or not I lived up to their expectations. Consequently I was tempted to do what I wanted to do, even if it was contrary to their expectations, in the hope that I would not be caught.

Some would call this freedom; I would call it bondage to my own sinful inclinations. When I obeyed my parent's will, my conscience was at peace. When I disobeyed, which I often did, my conscience was convicted and I feared being caught.

The Psalmist writes, "O *Yahweh*, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar." Yeshua is omniscient; he knows everything about you and me. There is nothing hidden from him; not even our thoughts. To some, this would be intimidating. There is no way to "get away" with anything. But, to the believer, this

is the epitome of freedom. We never have to be concerned whether or not we will be caught. This serves as a motivator to do what is right because it is as if Yeshua is right there with us to help us along the way each day.

David, the author of this Psalm, learned of the omniscience of God through his victories and through his defeats. In the end he embraced this knowledge and wrote, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24).

R&D God Almighty knows everything about you. When you have trusted in Jesus as Lord and Savior, this is a source of great comfort. You, like David, can implore him to search you and remove anything offensive so that he can “lead me in the way everlasting.”

Prayer: Lord Jesus, search me and see if there is any offensive way in me. Transform me; lead me in the way everlasting. In your name I pray.

Lesson 25

Read: Psalm 150

Praise Yeshua

Over the last month we have gleaned a great deal about Yahweh and His Son, Yeshua, from the *cipher tehillim*, “the book of praises.” Our response can be best expressed by reciting the last of the Psalms. The first verse and last verse sum it up, “Praise Yahweh.” The author writes “praise him” thirteen times in six verses.

He is to be praised for “his acts of power and for his surpassing greatness” (v.2). He is to be praised with “trumpets, harps, lyres, tambourines, strings, flutes, and resounding cymbals” (vv.3-5). He is to be praised with “dancing” (v.4). In other words, Yeshua can be praised in many different ways. The important thing is that we praise him for who he is and what he has done. The Psalmist ends the psalm of praise with, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord” (v.6).

Praise results in an encounter with the Holy One of Israel. David writes, “You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel” (Psalm 22:2 NAS). When we praise him, we enter his heavenly presence; we stand before his majestic throne. This is why David wrote, “Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens” (v.1). Yeshua is “enthroned upon our praises,” therefore, we enter his sanctuary when we praise him with all our heart in whatever way we choose to express that praise.

Let me end this study with the blessing Yahweh instructed Aaron, the High Priest, to use to bless the people of Israel: “The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you *shalom* (peace)” (Numbers 6:24-26).

R&D Have you encountered the Holy One of Israel? Have you experienced what it means to praise Him in His sanctuary? As you read, sing, or shout Psalm 150 with all your heart, you will bless your heavenly Lord and you will be blessed!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I praise you for all that you are and all that you have done. You are worthy of all praise, honor and glory. Thank you for your love and grace in my life. Praise the Lord!

by Samuel Clarke

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