

Psalm 92

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[0 : 0 0] well if you didn't know where I come from my accent probably betrays that and for many of us growing up on the Isle of Lewis on the Sabbath or the Sabbath day was quite unique it was a day of reflection and worship and nothing much else even riding a bike to Sunday school was something that was frowned upon in fact forbidden and we were not allowed to read your comics on a Sunday either I remember Mary Morrison who was very much involved in the faith mission telling in her testimony that she used to read her people's friend hidden behind in another Christian book maybe the Christian Herald at that time she would she would be reading the people's friend hidden by the Christian Herald by the Christian Herald what a dull people were what a dull people were or were we not a bit of it I wouldn't agree with that for a moment we had much fun of fun and laughter as much as anyone else and possibly even more but the day of rest was respected by all I remember a family arriving in Lewis they were an

English family I got to know them and they were they really disliked the the way of life in Lewis on a Sunday when they first came up after a few months of living there I was speaking to them again and they said we love this we don't have we don't have to do anything on Sunday they weren't church going people but they said we don't have to do anything on Sunday they wouldn't have it any other way they didn't want it to be a mainland Sunday sadly that's not how it is today in many places there's a lot to agree in the statement that Jesus made in Matthew sorry Mark 2 and 27 the Sabbath was made for man but not man for the Sabbath people need rest for the good of body and mind and soul we might say that I'll being restricted when we're growing up was staying to the stream but today half a century or more later it's the other way this the pendulum has swung right across to the other direction there is no special day of rest people are expected to work when when I started my career in the grocery trade years ago if you water Saturday you got time and a half of you or Sunday you got double time on special occasions I don't think there is such a thing now there is no special day of rest is there any wonder that people are suffering from all kinds of stresses in our day now strictly speaking the Sabbath day of the psalmist would have been the Saturday as it still is for for Jews around the world today Shabbat bring begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday such as a strictness of the Jewish traditions right up to this very day and the traditions are quite tough at times that the hotel we wanted to book into on Friday night when we arrived initial next time wasn't available to us because it was Shabbat they wouldn't accept us in on the ship the evening of the other the start of

Shabbat we had to go and find another hotel but let's look at the psalm this is one that is unique among the psalms it's the only one that is entitled a song for the Sabbath now traditionally worship would have been conducted in the temple on a daily basis so perhaps this psalm this psalm 92 was set aside for a liturgy on the Sabbath day itself on Shabbat now as many of you know the book of psalms is made up of five books beginning with psalm 1 psalm 42 psalm 73 psalm 90 and psalm 101 this psalm is part of book 4 psalms 90 to 100 which are the 11 psalms framed by prayer and praise psalm 90 begins lord you have been a dwelling place throughout all generations and it ends in psalm 100 for you for the lord is good and his love endures forever his faithfulness continues through all generations so there's a theme going through the psalms these psalms the psalmist here has found god to be continually faithful throughout his days have we not found him to be faithful in our own life's experiences and so when god's people came together on Shabbat they would praise the lord for his love for his faithfulness for upholding them for keeping them in verse 14 we see mention of folks like some of us here tonight and the medical psalm version of psalm 92 at verse 14 it says and in old age when others fade their fruit shall forth still forth shall bring they shall be fat and full of sap and i be flourishing remember that while we draw breath god is not finished with any one of us some of you may also know that a few years ago there used to be a gospel

music convention in phraserborough it lasted for about 10 or a dozen years and it was there was there was thousands of people who gathered there over over the weekend to hear uh singers from the uk from the usa from southern gospel mainly uh some from the scandinavian country some from ireland and it was a great time and these these singers who came from all over the world groups were were given to churches all over the northeast uh for the sunday morning services and one couple came to our church in gardenston they were called joel and labriska hempel and they sang at the at the church one sunday morning and the song was he's still working on me now you can find that song on on youtube or whatever he's still working on me to make me what i need to be it took him just a week to make the moon and the stars the the sun and the earth and jupiter and mars how loving and patient he must be because he's still working on me god god of creation had had had had created all these things and he's still working on poor old me that's uh that's a feeling we get from this this uh the song the scottish medical version of the psalm begins this way to render thanks unto the lord it is a comely thing and we love to to sing the medical psalms as well and to their name oh thou most high do praise allow to sing that's in the in the older version of the psalms when the people of israel met on shabbat as we do on sunday it was to worship and praise the lord jehovah yahweh but we cannot but agree with the psalmist in this statement here it is good to praise the lord and make music to your name oh most high to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp at times when we come to a church service like this we may be feeling a bit down at heart for whatever reason for a variety of reasons only to be lifted up during the service because something that the lord has placed in our hearts you know sometimes we're oblivious to what the the the preacher is saying is as the lord takes us and ascends into his own presence and carries us through the service we're uplifted just by a word or two that is heard that is sung that is prayed it is good to praise the lord and to make music to your name oh lord it's also good for us to to sometimes leave our natural scottish reserve behind as we meditate on the greatness of the lord and the wonderful things he has done and is doing in us i recall my first visit to jerusalem back in uh i think it was uh march to march 1997 and at that time the garden tomb was open on a sunday morning and it may be open again but for for a number of years it was closed on a sunday morning and we worshiped at the garden tomb and truly in the words of this the other song we sing now is my heart was full of thankfulness and joy down from where i sat just just down below me was the the empty tomb on the door of red he is not here he is risen my scottish reserve was gone on that day as tears flowed down my face tears of joy because the lord had touched my heart so deeply at times when our hearts are heavy we recall the words of paul in romans 8 and 28 and we know that god causes everything to work together for the good of those who love god and are called according to his purposes for them if we have come in here tonight and we're feeling maybe a bit sad sorrowful let's ask ourselves what would it be like if we didn't know god at all if we didn't know the cross of christ if we didn't know the forgiveness of sin or the promise of his presence of protection what would it be like thank god that he's a loving and caring and compassionate and kind god what would it be like not knowing the prospect of eternal life with christ what would it be like we're to do more than just appreciate what god has done for us like the psalmist we're to give thanks it is good to praise the lord and make music to your name oh most high many of us i'm sure will read god's word

maybe morning and evening maybe sometime during the day it's a habit that we had in the islands and many of us still do i know that modern life has affected the reading of god's word morning and evening like we used to do in the morning as we were growing up my father would read the scriptures to us morning and evening even if we didn't appreciate it at the time because we were not yet in christ oh to get back to these days and to hear my father read the words of scripture again to hear the elders in the church pray those prayers which even as a non-converted sinner moved me to tears it is good to praise the lord to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the harp of the melody now we weren't a musical family uh although my sisters are good singers uh my mother was an excellent singer i i took after my father and can hardly sing two words well i cannot but i remember as my mother went around doing her chores whatever it was even just milking the cows she would be singing psalms and spiritual songs around the house all day praise and worship of god cannot be reserved for a sunday morning or a sunday evening it is something we can do any any hour of the day any hour of the night and we know that instrumental music worship pray it pleases god as well for his given gifts to do so and we've seen that tonight in here the psalm speaks of the music of the lute and the harp as

well as the melody of the lyre the trumpets and the and the sound of the horn that's not saying that singing a cappella and accompanied it's unacceptable far from it because the lord loves to hear the human voice but he also seems to love to hear the harmonious sounds from a variety of instruments giving him praise psalm 150 says speaks of the the trumpets sound of the lute and harp the tambourine strings and pipe the sounding symbols and even the loud clashing symbols can you imagine what heaven will be like the psalter and verse four says for thou lord by thy mighty works has made my heart right glad and i will triumph in the works which by thine hands were made clearly god delights in our joyful worship for you make me glad by your deeds so god i sing for joy at the worst of your hands when we consider all that he has done even for us for poor me we're to make a joyful noise and to the lord and break forth into joyous song as it says in psalm 98 and verse 4 j van dyck penned these words over a hundred years ago joyful joyful we adore thee god of glory lord of love hearts unfold like flowers before thee opening to the sun above melt the clouds of sin and sadness dry the dark of doubt away giver of immortal gladness fill us with the light of day all thy works with joys around thee earth and heaven reflect thy rays stars and angels sing around thee center off unbroken praise field and forest vale and mountain flowery meadow flashing sea [16:02] singing bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee oh how great are your works oh lord how profound your thoughts the work of creation are astounding and who but almighty god himself could plan and create such a work as as a as a world as a universe that we live in now i'm no scientist but i read that the sun is over 300 times larger than the earth it doesn't seem that from our point of view that there are about 3 000 stars visible on a clear moonless night about a hundred thousand stars can be seen using a small telescope but there's an estimated 100 billion stars out there that we cannot even see stars in our own milky way galaxy i i for one cannot grasp it all and to see it came out of a black hole impossible it's these hands of god that flung the stars into space as the song says it says i also read that the world's oceans have some only 20 million tons of gold 20 million tons of gold how great are your works oh lord how profound your thoughts are we not in awe when we consider the work of his hands along with the psalmist again in psalm 8 says when i consider your heavens the work of your fingers the moon and the stars which are set in place what is man that you're mindful of the son of man that you care for him you made him a little lower than the heavenly heavenly beings or heavenly angels and crowned him with glory and honor and then we see the statement in psalm 92 at verse 6 the senseless man does not know fools do not understand that though the wicked spring up like grass and all evil doers flourish they will be forever destroyed but you lord are exalted forever for surely your enemies oh lord surely your enemies will perish all evil doers will be scattered this draws a contrast between the people who are unfaithful and those who are faithful to the covenant of god the unfaithful the unfaithful the psalmist says are unable to grasp the great works of god no matter how they might flourish there in verse 7 for the present and he also says that god will bring judgment upon those who despise him but those who hold fast to god and love and in obedience the lord has made strong verse 10 as strong as a wild ox it says the new living translation my eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries it says in verse 11 my ears have heard the route of my wicked foes now these words my eyes have seen and my ears have heard indicate that we can see the psalmist could see around them the wicked being destroyed in verse 7

in verse 7 we we saw that they seem to prosper but their prosperity was short-lived god always vindicates a faithful who have kept loyal to him even in the face of seductive temptations to give in to the unfaithful acts of the ungodly verse 10 says you have exalted my horn you have strengthened me like that of a wild horse fine oils have been poured on me you have blessed me oh lord you have poured so many blessings upon me and those who are fruitful in their youth are also fruitful in their old age the psalmist suggests and that doesn't happen by mistake it takes many years of faithful living for the lord to get to the point where you are fruitful in old age the righteous will flourish like a palm tree they will grow like a cedar of lebanon planted in the house of the lord they will flourish in the courts of our god and and then yet another biblical agricultural scene of of planting and growing the process continues of flourishing and strengthening and the psalmist says that the righteous are planted in the house of the lord which speaks of being in his presence in a place where he can come to know him and grow in him this is such a place where we can come to know and grow in the lord it says the psalmist says that the righteous are planted like a tree that is planted like a tree that is planted by a river where it can see the receive the greatest amount of nutrients so it can bear fruit and flourish the same concept is is in psalm psalm 1 and verse 3 he

shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth fruit in its season whose leaf also shall not wither and whatever he does shall prosper even when the river bed is dry the tree that is planted by the river will have put its roots down deep so that in the dry season there's sustenance for it again back to my first time in israel 19 1997 1997 there was this tree on the road between the old road between jerusalem and jericho and it seemed to be right out in the desert it was in a dry river bed its roots obviously going far deep into the earth where it's got its nourishment from and the last time we were there just a couple of years back that tree is still there flourishing even in the dryness of the world around about us where we have our roots deep in the lord we too shall flourish god's desire for us in this is that we are fed that we are nourished through the word and we pray that this will be the case when you get your new pastor hopefully in the not too distant future that your word will be preached with this word will be preached with power and that many will come to a saving faith the natural thing that will happen is that as one grows older they or rather we will continue to be to bear the fruits that have been cultivated a long life's journey remember in the story of daniel he made a decision in captivity not to be defiled by the world and by the good royal food offered to him by the king he could have sat at the king's table at the king's fair but he said no to it he had learned

to habitually pray as a younger man to god and the decisions and habits of his younger days prepared him for the kind of trust he needed in the lord as he and the rest of the nation were taken in captivity and received the edict like the rest of the empire not to pray to anyone but the king not the king of kings but the king of that land his many years of being fruitful to the lord prepared him for one of his biggest tests and he passed the test remember how he was thrown into the lion's den and he was delivered by god through his faithfulness they shall still bear fruit in old age as daniel did they shall they will stay fresh and green proclaiming the lord is upright he is my rock there is no wickedness in him many people we know work hard all their lives so that they can have a good and happy retirement their planning begins early in their working lives so that they no longer have to work into old age but be able to just enjoy and relax and follow some of their interests in retirement preparing for the future is also a biblical concept often mentioned but as believers we need to make our calling and our election sure and that we do not fall into the mindset that that as we as we get older we're going to sit back and relax because there is no spiritual retirement in this life as they say old soldiers never die they are still active telling stories of battles won and the same goes for the christian as we as we as we go on in years we go on with the lord we may speak of retirement and that is fine and good and i'm i'm enjoying retirement don't get me wrong we can say i've done my bit now i can sit back and relax and let others do the work of the kingdom in a sense that does although we may not be as active as we as we once were we never stop loving sharing the love of the lord jesus christ using the strength and the wisdom that the lord has given to us we continue to do the work of god in his kingdom and for the kingdom there is a great need in our day for godly and fruitful older people who can prepare the next generation for the lord's work we can reach your grandchildren's generation partly because we've got the time that our that working parents don't have and if that's i regret of many parents is that they didn't spend as much time with our children as they as they could have but that's where grandparents come in and grandchildren don't and their grannies and granddads so they're able to give them more time more time more time than than even their parents sometimes and in old age when others fade they forth still fruit shall bring they shall be fat and full of sap and i be flourishing what have you gained throughout your life that you're able to give to maybe a grandchild even a great grandchild nowadays of all that you have learned from the lord we have many gifts to give to share are we still bearing fruit for the lord in our old age now i know that many of many of the people in here tonight are of a younger generation and uh it's preparation for for the days to come and you have been given a much fruit of the lord to share too while you are growing up and growing growing in him are we sharing our love of god to the third and fourth generation as as an older generation maybe next sunday when we come back to church we'll be able to tell of the blessings we received when we have told what the lord has done for us i remember one time when just just after i became a christian i became a christian i was in the in the in the supermarket and stormy and and uh this older man came in much older he's he's gone to be with the lord many many years ago and uh he came to speak to me knowing that knowing that i'd i'd been converted and uh uh he was such a nice kind man and words of encouragement and uh i didn't think i had anything to give to this man but he met with one of my neighbors down down the town later on that day and he said what an encouragement i got from that young man today and and to this day i just do not know how i

encourage that man in any way so we can encourage people in different ways and never know it so go out into this week go out with the love of christ go out with the with your hand in the hand of christ and show his love to others in some gentle way so that some others may say what a blessing i received today amen and may the lord bless to us for thinking of these uh through these few words tonight lord let's let's pray again lord we thank you again for the blessedness of your word and especially the blessedness we find in the psalms uh psalms which point us to all kinds of different scenarios in our lives psalms which have been so helpful helpful to us like psalm 23 and psalm 46 and psalm 121 so many psalm 1 psalm 100 lord there are so many there are favorites of so many people situations as psalmist was in and put into words have helped so many countless millions of people over the last 3 000 years that only you know and father you are continuing continuing to bless us through these psalms written so long ago so lord we want to thank you uh for for them and for for those who put them put pen to paper as it were we thank you for the inspiration that you gave these writers and father for the blessings that we received today in jesus name we pray amen you