

**May 26**

**Scriptures:** Read Psalms 92, 93 & 94

**Key Verse:** “The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” (Psalm 92:12)

## **Overview**

Psalm 92 was used in the Temple liturgy on the Sabbath, likely during the special offerings (Numbers 28:9). This psalm celebrates the righteous works of the Lord and testifies to the prosperity of the righteous. We learn the importance of giving thanks to the Lord individually and corporately for His loving-kindness and faithfulness as well as His sovereignty over creation and righteous judgments.

The psalmist is not troubled by the prosperity of the wicked as were Job (Job 21:7) and Asaph (Ps. 73:2-3). He understands those to be fools who do not fear God nor consider His way, and although the wicked are numerous, they will soon be destroyed like the temporal and easily withered grass. In contrast, the wise man does consider the profoundness of God (92:5; cf. Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33). He recognizes that God is “on high forevermore” (92:8) and His enemies will perish. He is likened to two trees: a flourishing palm that represents honour, strength, continuity, and fruitfulness even in its old age; and a cedar of Lebanon (Is. 2:13; Ps. 104:16) which is always green, tall, of top quality (its wood was used for the temple), and firmly rooted, so that it can withstand all storms. These blessings are from God who exalts and strengthens His servants who flourish in His presence (92:10,13; 27:4-6) so that they might be able to be effective witnesses for Him by declaring God’s righteousness and strength (92:15; cf. Deut. 32:4).

Psalm 93 describes God as the transcendent, mighty, Sovereign Ruler and Eternal King over all creation. Many of the psalms which follow also proclaim that God reigns as King (95:3; 96:10; 97:1; 98:6, 9; 99:1). Just as He is from everlasting to everlasting (90:2), so His throne is established for eternity (93:2). Unlike an earthy king, whose garments merely represent majesty and strength, the Lord Himself is clothed with majesty and strength. His kingdom has no boundaries, for He is not only sovereign over Israel (Deut. 33:5; Ex. 15:18) but the whole world (Isaiah 24:21-23; Rev. 19:6), and since it is established by Him, it cannot be shaken by any opposing force (93:1; cf. Heb. 12:28).

The ungodly nations which ruled and often oppressed the earth are represented in this psalm by the “floods” (literal translation is “rivers”), such as the great empires or world super powers which are often symbolized by the Nile River (Egypt) and the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers (Babylon and Assyria; Jer. 46:6-8). Though they should rise up like a torrent against God and try to destroy His plans, all their attempts are futile (94:11), for God cannot be shaken (29:10). These empires will themselves be washed away, but God’s House (Kingdom) will remain forever, since it is based upon His attributes, such as His holiness (93:5; 47:1-3; cf. Isaiah 66:1; Acts 7:48-50). His testimonies are a great treasure which will also remain fixed and sure forever because they are truth (cf. 19:7-9).

Psalm 94 gives a message of comfort and consolation to the righteous in the midst of affliction and persecution by oppressors. God's people know, without any doubts, that God rules with all authority over the earth, and yet when they see evil men mocking the righteous, they are anxious for God to give them their just deserts. The people of God do not ask for this out of bitterness or enmity, but it is a cry for vengeance or retribution (cf. Jer. 51:56), so that evil will be gone and the evildoers, who do not fear God, will be punished with what they deserve (Rom. 6:23). The righteous call for God to "shine forth", asking that He reveal Himself (50:2; 80:1) with His divine authority, for wherever the brightness of God's glory shines, there can be no evil.

The evildoers are proud, arrogant, insolent people, who may have been apostate Jews or Gentile foreigners. They praise themselves for their evil, and they are so treacherous that they take pleasure in afflicting and even murdering the orphans, widows, and strangers who were helpless; but under the Law of God, they had rights in Israel (Ex. 22:21-24). Even though the crimes committed were against the Law of God and the sacredness of their fellow man, they still continued to sin, since they imagined that "the Lord does not see" (94:7; 10:11; Ezek. 8:12; Isa. 29:15; Luke 8:17; 12:2-3). The psalmist calls them the most foolish of people (94:8; 92:6). How could they believe that the Creator could not see their wrongdoing or hear them (94:9)? God can even see into the heart and minds of man, since He has all authority and is greater than His creatures (139:1-4; John 2:24-25).

The psalmist turns to testify about the providential and personal care God gives him which provides peace of mind and inner rest in the midst of turmoil. He also affirms his belief in the power and righteousness of God and the final retribution of evil as God judges the innocent blood they spilt. The righteous can take comfort in knowing that evil will not go unpunished.

## **Prayer**

Thank You, Lord, for the promises You give to Your righteous servants. Help us to grow tall and strong in You, like a firmly-rooted tree, and bear fruit for Your eternal Kingdom.