

Psalm 9 – THE LORD NEVER FORGETS HIS OWN! (Part 1)

INTRODUCTION – It is not a good experience to be forgotten in a time of need. It is even more disappointing and hurting when the person who promised to be there to help did not come. One tends to feel betrayed and discouraged. There are times when Christians feel this way, especially when they are doing the work of God. They feel that they have not committed any crime or sin that deserved such persecution and attacks by evil men. When help from the LORD fails to arrive according to expectation, disappointment sets in, followed quickly by disillusionment, resulting perhaps even in anger and frustration. Such roller coaster rides of emotion are far too common because we are immature in our understanding of God. The LORD never breaks His promises. All that He has promised will definitely come to pass. One of these promises is that He will never forget His children.

Psalm 9 was written by David. It was addressed to the chief Musician upon Muth-lab-ben. The word “muth-lab-ben” means “death of a son”. Three sons died during David’s lifetime. They were the baby born out of wedlock by Bathsheba; Amon who was murdered by his half brother Absalom because he had raped Absalom’s sister; and Absalom who was killed in battle after he usurped David’s throne. Adonijah, the fourth son of David died during the reign of Solomon, which was after David’s death. He cannot be the “son” referred to here in Psalm 9. Of the abovementioned three sons who died during David’s reign, only Absalom fits the description. Some commentators like Barnes find it inconceivable that David would write a psalm in praise of the LORD after his own son had died. It is true that such a thought is hard to imagine. However, if the believer wants to be Christ’s disciple whereby he is to love God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength and to hate our father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sister and even his own life for Christ’s sake, then Psalm 9 could very well refer to the incident AFTER the death of Absalom. David wept so profusely over the death of Absalom that Joab had to rebuke him for it (2 Samuel 19:1-10). Perhaps it was after Joab’s rebuke that David came to his senses and wrote this psalm. David realized that he was not just a father but a king as well. As a king, David had been called by the LORD for a spiritual mission to bring forth the Messiah for the salvation of the world. Absalom was trying to destroy the work of the LORD and not David’s kingdom, for the kingdom did not belong to David to begin with.

When the child of God experiences the comfort of the LORD’s protection, his heart will automatically praise God. David said that he would praise the LORD most High with his whole heart. Every part of his heart wants to praise Him. The content of his praise, as revealed in the psalm, is the marvellous work of the LORD in his life. David shared from experiential knowledge. However, David was careful to state clearly that it was not the works of the LORD that made him glad but the LORD Himself. The LORD caused him to be glad and to rejoice IN the LORD and to praise the name of the LORD (v2). God is called the most High God. The phrase “most High” simply means that there is no one more important

than the LORD who is above every creature and the so-called gods. The LORD is the greatest and mightiest. He takes care of His own!

David the psalmist then proceeded to share about the LORD's protection over him [and all believers] by way of five experiences.

- I. **THE LORD REBUKES THE HEATHENS -- V 3-7** – David was certain of the LORD's righteous judgement and deliverance. *"When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence."* (v3). David used the word "when" rather than "if" to signify the certainty of it. The battle is the LORD's and the deliverance is the LORD's. David's role in his time of trial was to trust and remain faithful, and not sin against his God. If David sinned, he would have lost. The LORD could not maintain David's right and cause if he had sinned. However, if David maintained his righteousness and his righteous cause, then the LORD, who judges righteously without respect of persons, would cause David's enemies to perish and fall. The LORD never leaves His throne. He is always in total and absolute control over all the affairs of men including all the enemies of God's children.

The LORD's absolute control is in His rebuke of the heathens including the destruction (i.e. blot out) of the wicked. The LORD will also put out, i.e. wipe out, their name forever and ever. David deliberately used three completed actions (v 5) to describe his experiential knowledge of the thoroughness of the LORD's destruction of David's enemies. Did the LORD over-punish David's enemies? The next verse reveals that what the LORD did was according to just retribution.

David turned his attention to the enemies, describing their evil deeds in verse 6, *"O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them."* David's enemy had destroyed cities. The nature of the destruction was vicious because the memory of these cities perished with their destruction. Their destruction of these cities was total and complete. Therefore, with their own destruction from the LORD, their acts of destruction would come to a perpetual end. However, the LORD will endure forever. The enemy's attacks will not in any way hinder the work and will of the LORD in the lives of His servants like David. The enemy's destructions may appear to have set the plan of God back but in the end, the will of the LORD will prevail. David described this in the future tense. However, using the completed action, the LORD declared that He had already prepared His throne for judgement. David's enemy will not escape the final and most important judgement on earth. This would be a judgement called by the Judge of all judges. Every sinner will be there to account for every good and evil deed done in this life. There are no exceptions.

II. THE LORD REMEMBERS HIS OWN – V 8-10 – The judgement of the LORD will be most equitable. The scope of His judgement is the whole world. It will be done in righteousness. Using synonymous parallelism, the LORD repeats the same thought by saying that, “he shall minister judgement in uprightness.” Since the standard of the LORD’s judgement is His righteousness, then it goes without saying that all of God’s children who possess this righteousness and live a life of righteousness will stand on this day of judgement. However, those who do not have this righteousness of the LORD in him and in his life will be found wanting, and condemnation will definitely follow. This righteousness is the imputed righteousness given by the LORD to all who have sincerely received in their heart Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour (read Romans 4:22-24; James 2:23).

The LORD will be a refuge to those who are oppressed. They can go to the LORD for consolation and comfort. He will relieve them of their oppression. If they are oppressed for righteousness sake, then they can go to the LORD for justice, and the LORD will deliver them from their oppressors, as David did. If they are oppressed because of their sins, like Israel in the days of the Judges, they can also go to the LORD but in repentance and seeking forgiveness for sins committed against Him. The LORD will be a refuge to all who are in trouble. The use of synonymous parallelism is to stress the certainty of the LORD’s protection and deliverance.

Those who truly know the LORD will believe and put their trust in Him like David. No matter how trying the persecutions might be, they will remain just and faithful and will not forsake the LORD, because they know that the LORD has not forsaken, and will not forsake them. They will trust in the LORD to know what is best. If He has allowed persecutions to befall His children, it will all work out for their good always.

[to be continued]