

# PSALM 92

## INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 92

### *A Psalm [or] Song for the Sabbath day.*

Many of the Jewish writers <sup>f1325</sup> think that this psalm was written by the first man Adam, and so the Targum,

“a hymn or song which the first man said for the sabbath day.”

But had it been a composure of his, one would think it should have been placed at the head of this collection of psalms, and before that of Moses, Psalm 90, besides there were no musical instruments then for this psalm to be sung on, as in (<sup>492B</sup>Psalm 92:3), for they say it was made by him quickly after his creation, and his ejection from paradise; for Jubal was the father of them that handle the harp and organ; nor were there any number of enemies and wicked men to rise up against him, as in (<sup>492B</sup>Psalm 92:7,9,11). Nor was it written by Moses, as others have thought; but rather by David, to whom the Arabic version ascribes it; the musical instruments, the number of enemies, and the mention of the house and courts of the Lord, best agree with his times. It was made for the sabbath day, and to be used upon it; and directs to the work and worship of it; praising of God and celebrating his works, attending his house and ordinances; even for the seventh day sabbath, which God instituted and appointed the Jews to observe; and which in David’s time was religiously kept; though some understand this of the time of rest which David had from his enemies round about him, and apply it to all such times of rest from tyranny and persecution, which the church of God in any period enjoys; and which is a proper season for praise and thanksgiving. Some Jewish writers refer it to the world to come, which will be all sabbath, even to the days of the Messiah, as Jarchi and others; so Theodorot; (see <sup>800B</sup>Hebrews 4:9).

**Ver. 1.** *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord*, etc.] For all mercies, temporal and spiritual; for Christ, and salvation by him; for the Gospel, and for Gospel opportunities and ordinances; for, such days and seasons this psalm was composed for. It is “good” so to do, for it is the will of God that we should in and for every thing give thanks; it is due unto

him, and is our reasonable service; it is well pleasing unto God through Christ; it is pleasant work for the saints themselves, and is profitable unto them; to be thankful for what they have is the way to have more. Kimchi connects this with the title; the sabbath day is good to give thanks unto the Lord; it is a very fit opportunity for such service; when a man is at leisure from worldly business, and his heart is engaged in spiritual exercises, and especially when it is warmed with the love of God:

*and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High*; a name and epithet of God, suitable to his majesty and glory, to his supereminence over all his creatures, and the place where he dwells, and to whom the highest praises are due; these two phrases, giving thanks, and singing praise, are much the same; only with this difference, the former may be done in prayer, and without the modulation of the voice, as well as with it; the latter only with it; hence these two are mentioned as distinct things in (~~4159~~ Ephesians 5:19,20).

**Ver. 2.** *To show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning*, etc.] God has shown forth his lovingkindness in Christ, and Christ has shown it in a ministerial way; and saints should show it forth also with their lips, to warm the hearts of one another, and encourage distressed minds; this should be a part, and a considerable one, of their thanksgiving and praise; as it will appear to be, when the objects of it are considered, not angels, but men, and these the worst and vilest; the instances of it in election, redemption, calling, adoption, and eternal life; and the freeness, earliness, and immovableness of it; and this is to be done in the “morning”, not of the sabbath day only, but every other day, giving praise and thanks for the mercies of the night. Jarchi interprets it of the time of salvation:

*and thy faithfulness every night*: or “in the nights”<sup>f1326</sup>; not the night and goings out of the sabbath only, so Arama; but every other night, observing and declaring the faithfulness and truth of God in his counsels and covenant, in his word and promises, and in the preservation of his people, and the continuance of favours to them; particularly praising his name, and giving thanks unto him openly for the mercies of the day past: morning and night being mentioned may have some respect to the morning and evening sacrifices; and may signify that our sacrifices of praise should be offered up to God continually, (~~8315~~ Hebrews 13:15).

**Ver. 3.** *Upon an instrument of ten strings*, etc.] An harp of ten strings, as the Targum. The harp invented by Terpander had only seven strings<sup>f1327</sup>;

according to Pliny<sup>f1328</sup>; Simonides added the eighth, and Timotheus the ninth; but this of David was of ten strings:

*and upon the psaltery*; of which (see Gill on “~~499D~~Psalm 33:2”), “upon the harp with a solemn sound”; or “upon higgsaon with the harp”; which “higgsaon”, Aben Ezra says, was either the tune of a song, or an instrument of music; all these instruments of music were typical of the spiritual joy and melody which the saints have in their hearts when they praise the Lord; hence mention is made of harps in particular in this spiritual sense, under the Gospel dispensation, (~~498B~~Revelation 5:8 14:2,3 15:2,3).

**Ver. 4.** *For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work*, etc.] Either of creation, which work is mentioned in the precept of the sabbath, as an argument for it; and therefore a very proper work to be remembered and observed on that day; or of providence, which in general extends to all men, but especially to them that believe; or of the work of redemption wrought out by Christ, which is cause of great joy and gladness; or of the work of grace upon the soul, which when a man is satisfied of, gives him infinite pleasure, as knowing it will be performed until the day of Christ; and when a man is in such a joyful frame of spirit, he is in a very suitable one to sing the praises of God, (~~495B~~James 5:13),

*I will triumph in the works of thine hands*; those before mentioned; or shout aloud for joy, on account of them; and also triumph over all enemies, as being out of the reach of them, so as to be hurt and ruined by them.

**Ver. 5.** *O Lord, how great are thy works!* etc.] Of nature, providence, and grace, both for quantity and for quality, for number, excellency, and glory, as they are a display of God’s wisdom, power, and goodness; (see ~~494B~~Psalm 104:24),

*and thy thoughts are very deep*; his counsels, purposes, and designs, they are unfathomable and unsearchable; (see ~~491D~~1 Corinthians 2:10).

**Ver. 6.** *A brutish man knoweth not*, etc.] The lovingkindness of the Lord, and his faithfulness, nor how to show them forth, nor his great works and deep thoughts; man was made originally far above the brute creatures, and had them all under his dominion; but, sinning, became like the beasts that perish; and is in Scripture often compared to one or other of them, as the horse, ass, etc. a brutish man is one that only knows things naturally, as brute beasts do, and in which also he corrupts himself; he is governed by sense, and not by reason, and much less by faith, which he has not; one that

indulges his sensual appetite, whose god is his belly, and minds nothing but earth and earthly things; and, though he has an immortal soul, has no more care of it, and concern about it, than a beast that has none; he lives like one, without fear or shame; and in some things acts below them, and at last dies, as they do, without any thought of, or regard unto, a future state:

*neither doth a fool understand this*; what is before said, or else what follows in the next verse, as Jarchi and others interpret it, concerning the end and event of the prosperity of the wicked; Arama interprets it of the Gentiles not knowing this law of the land, the sabbath, and so rejected it: a “fool” is the same with the “brutish” man, one that is so, not in things natural and civil, but in things moral, spiritual, and religious.

**Ver. 7.** *When the wicked spring as the grass*, etc.] Out of the earth, as they do, and are of the earth earthly, and become numerous as spires of grass, and look pleasant and beautiful for a while, as that does; but, like it, weak and unstable, and of a short continuance:

*and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish*; in the health of their bodies; not being afflicted as other men, and their eyes standing out with fatness; while a Job, an upright man, is smitten with boils from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot: in wealth and riches, in which they increase often to such a degree, as to think of pulling down their barns, and building greater, to put their substance in; in their progeny and offspring, having a numerous issue; as well as in their cattle, and the standing of them, and in other stores; likewise in their power and authority, grandeur and glory, being set in high places of honour and profit, though slippery ones: these are the godly, who are “wicked” at heart, and show it by their wicked works; who are continually committing sin, it is the course of their conversation, and yet prosper in the world; which is sometimes a stumblingblock to God’s people, and a hardening of sinners, who consider not that

*it is that they shall be destroyed for ever* they are like brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, and as lambs and other creatures are nourished and fattened for the day of slaughter, (<sup><6021></sup>2 Peter 2:12 <sup><3415></sup>James 5:5), and as land is manured and cultivated, and grass springs up and flourishes, that it may be, when grown, cut down, and become the fodder of beasts, or the fuel of fire; so the prosperity of the wicked issues in their ruin, and is an aggravation of their damnation; their destruction is of soul and body in hell, and is an everlasting one; the Targum is,

“and it shall be that God shall destroy them for ever,”

**Ver. 8.** *But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore*, etc.] God is “the most High”; that is one of his names; he is above all, is higher than the highest; and he dwells on high, and looks down upon the inhabitants of the earth, and sees what is doing among them; and to him they will be accountable another day for what they do; and when wicked, men perish, being destroyed, he will continue for ever in all his greatness, glory, and majesty; for there seems to be an antithesis in this verse to the former, or between wicked men and the Lord; and besides he endures for ever to inflict punishment upon them; and therefore it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.

**Ver. 9.** *For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord*, etc.] The particle “lo”, or “behold”, is not used for the sake of God, but for the sake of men; to excite their attention, and to observe unto them that those who are everlastingly destroyed are the enemies of the Lord; who are enemies in their minds by wicked works, yea, enmity itself against God; and therefore their perdition is just as well as certain; sooner or later these shall be brought forth and slain before him; and for the certainty of it is repeated,

*for, lo, thine enemies shall perish*; the Targum adds, in the world to come: “all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered”; one from another, and not be able to unite and combine together against the saints, as they have done; or they shall be separated from them at the last day, being placed at Christ’s left hand; and shall not stand in judgment, nor in the congregation of the righteous; and so the Targum,

“and all the workers of iniquity shall be separated from the congregation of the righteous;”

(see <sup><4906></sup>Psalm 1:5).

**Ver. 10.** *But my horn shall thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn*, etc.] Which is said to be very high and strong, (see <sup><6837></sup>Deuteronomy 33:17) this may be understood of the establishment of David’s kingdom, of his royal authority, power, and the glory of it, signified by his horn; which was fulfilled when he had subdued the neighbouring nations, and the kings of them, and was exalted above them, and had rest from all his enemies: and may be applied unto the Messiah, the horn of David, the horn of salvation raised up in his house, (<sup><4927></sup>Psalm 132:17 <sup><4119></sup>Luke 1:69) and so may refer to exaltation at the right hand of God, and the strength and glory of his

kingdom; (see <sup><1020></sup>1 Samuel 2:10), and also may be interpreted of every good man, in opposition to the wicked; who, though low and abased, God will exalt and set them among princes, and cause them to inherit the throne of glory, and even to sit down on the same throne with Christ; (see <sup><1028></sup>1 Samuel 2:8 <sup><1022></sup>Revelation 3:21).

*I shall be anointed with fresh oil*; oil of olive, as the Targum; oil of myrrh, as Aben Ezra; it may respect David's unction to office, as king of Israel; for not only after he had been anointed by Samuel, but even after he was anointed by the men of Judah as king over them, he was afresh anointed by all the tribes of Israel as their king, (<sup><1034></sup>2 Samuel 2:4 5:3), "oil" often signifies the Spirit of God, his gifts and graces; and "fresh" oil may intend new supplies of his grace out of the fulness of it, which is in Christ; and also the renewed joys and comforts of the Holy Spirit, who is the oil of gladness Christ was anointed with above his fellows, and is given to his people in measure.

**Ver. 11.** *Mine eyes also shall see my desire on mine enemies*, etc.] The Targum supplies thus,

"shall see destruction;"

Aben Ezra, shall see "the vengeance of God", as in (<sup><1080></sup>Psalms 58:10), and Kimchi, as we do, shall "see what I will", or "my desire"; which arose not from a revengeful spirit, or from a spirit of private revenge, but from a regard to the glory of God, and the honour of his name; and in no other view could the destruction of fellow creatures, though his enemies, be grateful to him:

*and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me*; he should see the ruin of some, and hear of the destruction of others; that which his eyes saw not, his ears should hear; the report would be brought to him; as in the latter day the voice of the angel will be heard, "Babylon is fallen"; and other voices heard in heaven, giving glory to God; an account of which will be acceptable to the saints, because of the justice of God, and the honour of it, as well as because it will make for their future peace and comfort, (<sup><1082></sup>Revelation 18:2 19:1,2).

**Ver. 12.** *The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree*, etc.] Not like grass, as the wicked, (<sup><1092></sup>Psalms 92:7) which is weak and tender, and soon cut down; but like trees, and like palm trees, that are firm and strong, and of a long continuance: the word for righteous being of the singular number,

has led some to think that Christ is meant; but though he is eminently the righteous One, being so in himself, and the author of righteousness to others, yet not he, but his church and people, are compared to a palm tree, (~~2117~~ Song of Solomon 7:7,8), the reason why the singular number is made use of is, as Aben Ezra thinks, because the righteous are very few, in comparison of the wicked: the sense is, that everyone of the righteous, or everyone that is righteous, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and are created anew in righteousness and true holiness, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, are like the flourishing palm trees; which grow upright, and under the greatest pressures, and rise upwards against the greatest weight upon them <sup>f1329</sup>; whose force and vigour is on the top of them, which being cut off, they die; which delight in hot climates and sunny places, bear a delicious fruit, are ever green, are very durable, and their branches used in token of joy and victory; it is said to be a perfect image of a man, and in many things to resemble him <sup>f1330</sup>: so truly righteous persons are upright ones in heart and life, grow up into their head, Christ, and rise up heavenwards in their desires and affections; and, like the Israelites, the more they are pressed with the weight of afflictions, the more they grow; their grace and strength, their life and rigour, lie in their head, Christ; from whom was it possible they could be separated, as it is not, they would instantly die; they flourish under him, the sun of righteousness, and his warming beams of love, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness by him, to the glory of God; their leaf of profession does not wither, but is always green; the grace of God, which is in them, being an incorruptible and never dying seed: hence, in the issue, they make that palm, bearing company in (~~609~~ Revelation 7:9) who are more than conquerors through Christ, that has loved them: the Greek version is, “as the phoenix”, which some of the ancients understood of a bird so called, supposed to rise out of its ashes, and use it to prove the resurrection of the dead <sup>f1331</sup>:

*he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon*; where the best, tallest, largest, and strongest cedars grow; (see Gill on “~~2372~~ Isaiah 37:24”) to which the righteous are compared, who grow up by degrees higher and higher, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; and, stronger and stronger in him, go from strength to strength, having their spiritual strength renewed by him; and cast forth their roots in him, like Lebanon, and the cedars there; and spread their boughs and branches, like them, in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and grow in every grace, of faith, hope, love, humility, self-denial, and submission to the will of God, and in

the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and are durable as the cedar, never die, their life being hid with Christ in God. Kimchi refers this to the days of the Messiah.

**Ver. 13.** *Those that be planted in the house of the Lord*, etc.] Or being planted <sup>f1332</sup>, that is, everyone of the righteous before mentioned; such are they that are planted out of the wilderness of the world, and into Christ, and are rooted in him, and are planted together in the likeness of his death and resurrection; have the graces of the Spirit of God implanted in them, have received the ingrafted word; and, in consequence of all this, are grafted into the olive tree, the church; or have a place and name there, better than that of sons and daughters, where they are as plants grown up in their youth; and which is here meant by “the house of the Lord”, in allusion to the tabernacle, or temple, which had the figure of palm trees on the walls of it: so the Targum interprets it the temple, rendering it,

“his children shall be planted in the sanctuary of the Lord:”

and though it may seem strange that trees should be planted in an house, it should be remembered that the house of the Lord, or the church, is a garden, whose plants are an orchard of pomegranates, (~~2042~~ Song of Solomon 4:12,13), and such are not mere education plants, or such as are merely by outward profession, or only ministerially, planted, but are planted by the Lord himself; and so are choice and pleasant ones, by which God is glorified, and which shall never be plucked up: and these

*shall flourish in the courts of our God*; like trees in courtyards before houses; alluding to the courts in the tabernacle or temple, where the people worshipped: here the righteous flourish like palm trees, as in the preceding verse, being rooted in Christ, who is the righteous man’s root, that yieldeth fruit, and from whom all his fruit is found; but this flourishing is not merely in the leaves of profession, but in the fruits of grace and righteousness, being watered with the dews of divine grace, and having the benefit of the word and ordinances; which are the waters of the sanctuary, that refresh and quicken the trees of righteousness that grow by it; (see ~~3401~~ Ezekiel 47:1,7,12). This is referred to the times of the Messiah, and the resurrection, by the ancient Jews <sup>f1333</sup>.

**Ver. 14.** *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age*, etc.] Being thus planted and watered, they shall not only bring forth the fruits of righteousness, but shall continue, and go on to do so, and even when they



are grown old; contrary to all other trees, which, when old, cease bearing fruit; but so do not the righteous; grace is often in the greatest vigour when nature is decayed; witness Abraham, Job, David, Zachariah, and Elisabeth, and good old Simeon, who went to the grave like shocks of corn, fully ripe:

*they shall be fat and flourishing*; or “green”, full of sap and moisture, abound with green leaves and precious fruit; or, in other words, abound in grace, and be fruitful in every good work: being ingrafted into the true olive, the church of God, they partake of the root and fatness of it; having a place in the house of the Lord, they are satisfied with the goodness and fatness thereof, and are made to drink of the river of divine pleasure; and being in the courts of the Lord, where a feast of fat things is provided for them, they eat and feed, and so thrive and flourish; the allusion is to fat and flourishing palm trees <sup>f1334</sup>.

**Ver. 15.** *To show that the Lord is upright*, etc.] Or righteous, that is, faithful; as he is in his counsels, covenant, and promises, which he makes good by causing his people to grow and flourish, and become fruitful; by carrying on the work of grace upon their souls, and by preserving them to the end safe to his kingdom and glory; by all which it appears that he does not and will not suffer his faithfulness to fail: the Targum is,

“that the inhabitants of the earth may show, etc.”

*he is my Rock*; the psalmist sets his seal to the truth of God’s faithfulness, firmness, and constancy, calling him a Rock for his strength and stability, and claiming his interest in him; declaring he found him to be so by experience,

*even the Rock whose work is perfect*; who always completes what he undertakes, and finishes what he begins, and will not forsake the work of his own hands:

*just and right is he*; the Rock of ages, that remains firm, steadfast, and unalterable in all generations:

*and there is no unrighteousness in him*; as not in his sovereign acts of grace, so neither in his providential dispensations, either towards good men or bad men; not in suffering the wicked to prosper, as in (<sup>9907</sup>Psalm 92:7), and the righteous to be afflicted; nor in punishing bad men here, or hereafter; nor in justifying sinners by the righteousness of his Son, and

giving them the crown of righteousness at the last day: all his proceedings are in the most just and equitable manner; (see ~~604~~ Romans 9:14).