

# PSALM 112

## INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 112

This psalm, also, very probably, was written by David, and is composed as the former, in an alphabetical order. The inscription of it in the Syriac version is,

“When David in it commanded Solomon his son, saying, Keep the commandments of, the Lord, and worship him: likewise the calling of the Gentiles and the righteousness of Christ.”

The subject matter of the psalm are the character, conduct, usefulness, and happiness of a good man.

**Ver. 1.** *Praise ye the Lord*, etc.] Or, “hallelujah”. This is properly the title of the psalm: Aben Ezra says it is a word of the psalmist; it shows that all that a good man is, has, or does, is from the Lord; and therefore his name is to be praised: and he is not only to be praised for his perfections and works, but for this among others, that there are any good men on earth that fear and serve him, and are useful in their day and generation.

*Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord*; not men, but the Lord; not his wrath, nor his judgments here or hereafter, but his goodness; not with a servile, but with a godly fear. This every man does not; there are but few that truly fear the Lord, only such who have the grace of God; and these are happy men: they have an interest in the heart of God, in his pity, love, and delight; great discoveries are made unto them; the secret of the Lord is with them; he shows them his covenant; and the sun of righteousness arises upon them: they are guarded and protected by the Lord; his eye of providence, as well as love, is upon them, and his angels encamp about them: they are supplied with all needful good things, temporal and spiritual; and have much goodness laid up for them hereafter. This psalm begins with what the preceding ends, the fear of the Lord; and is a further illustration and enlargement of it; (see Gill on “<sup>3910</sup>Psalm 111:10”).

*That delighteth greatly in his commandments*: in the righteousness, purity, and holiness of them: in keeping and doing them: they are not grievous, but

pleasant; a good man delights in them, after the inward man; he observes them from a principle of love, and finds peace and pleasure in them; he loves them above gold, yea, above fine gold; and esteems them concerning all things to be right, (<sup>4397</sup>Psalm 119:97,127,128,165).

**Ver. 2.** *His seed shall be mighty upon earth*, etc.] The Targum is, “mighty in the law;”

as Apollos is said to be “mighty in the Scriptures”, (<sup>44824</sup>Acts 18:24). This must be understood of such of them as fear the Lord also, and love him, and delight in his commandments, according to (<sup>40216</sup>Exodus 20:6) and not in a literal sense, for not many mighty are called; but in a spiritual sense, of their being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Some understand this of the spiritual seed of Christ; and make him to be the man that feared the Lord, and greatly delighted in his commandments, as it is certain he did; he was heard in that he feared; and it was his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him. He has a spiritual seed; and these are mighty in the sense before given; and as they will be in the latter day, when the feeble among them shall be as David, and the house of David as God, as the Angel of the Lord; when the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints, and, being kings and priests, they shall reign with Christ on earth. Aben Ezra thinks the note of similitude “as” is wanting, and supplies it thus, “his seed shall be as a mighty man on earth”; be known, as he is in his generation.

*The generation of the upright shall be blessed*; the seed of them, as before, who are the upright in heart and conversation: or the age in which upright men live is happy on their account; or a succession of upright persons: or rather a company of them dwelling together, at the same time, and in the same place; the same with the generation of them that seek the Lord, (<sup>43246</sup>Psalm 24:6), these are blessed with spiritual and eternal blessings.

**Ver. 3.** *Wealth and riches shall be in his house*, etc.] In his family; if not possessed by him, yet by his posterity: though rather this signifies spiritual riches, the riches of grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ, durable riches and righteousness; seeing it is connected with an everlasting righteousness, as in the next clause.

*And his righteousness endureth for ever*; he is not hurt by his temporal riches, as others are, the prodigal, the covetous, and formal professor; he

continues the good and righteous man he was, notwithstanding his riches. Some understand this of his liberality with his riches, as alms deeds are sometimes called righteousness; (see <sup><4930></sup>Psalm 112:9 <sup><4101></sup>Matthew 6:1) though it rather intends either inherent righteousness, the new man which is created in righteousness, the inward principle of grace which always continues; or the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, which is an everlasting one.

**Ver. 4.** *Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness*, etc.] Upright ones are sometimes in the darkness of affliction, under divine desertions, without spiritual joy, and in an uncomfortable condition; when on a sudden light arises to them, like break of day, or the morning light: they have deliverance from affliction, and enjoy prosperity; the light of God's countenance is lifted up on them; the sun of righteousness arises upon them with healing in his wings; and spiritual joy and comfort are communicated unto them. It may denote the comforts the people of God have amidst their afflictions and troubles, even while they are in them; and the light they enjoy, while darkness is round about others, like the children of Israel in Egypt: or the suddenness of deliverance from adversity, temporal or spiritual; weeping endures for a night, joy comes in the morning, and at evening time it is light, (<sup><4915></sup>Psalm 30:5 <sup><3147></sup>Zechariah 14:7).

*He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous*; that is, the Lord is so. Thus the Arabic version,

“the Lord God is merciful and bountiful;”

and the Ethiopic version,

“merciful and compassionate is the Lord, and righteous is our King.”

And because God is the God of all grace, and is able to make it abound to his people, and is compassionate to them in distress, and is just and faithful to his promises; therefore he causes light to arise to them in darkness; and which, on such account, they may believe and expect; (see <sup><3008></sup>Micah 7:8,9). Some understand this of the upright man and of his character; that he is “gracious”, kind, and bountiful; that he is “full of compassion”, tenderhearted, and shows mercy to distressed objects; and is righteous, through Christ, and lives soberly and righteously. This sense agrees both with what goes before, and follows after.

**Ver. 5.** *A good man showeth favour, and lendeth*, etc.] Without usury, hoping for nothing again: he pities those that labour under difficulties, for want of a little money; and he generously lends it till they are able to pay him again; which oftentimes is of as much service as if it was given; (see <sup><4872></sup>Psalm 37:21,26 <sup><4164></sup>Luke 6:34,35). A good man is not only a man that has the good work of grace in him, and is ready to every good work; but one that is munificent, bountiful, and liberal; in which sense the word is used in ( <sup><4107></sup>Romans 5:7) and so in Latin writers <sup>f1592</sup>.

*He will guide his affairs with discretion*; his civil and domestic affairs: he will act the part of a good economist; so that he may be able to support his family with credit and reputation, and have something to give to the relief of those in want. Some restrain this to his acts of charity. He lends to some, and gives to others: he takes care that they to whom he gives are proper objects of charity; he gives to persons seasonably, and in proportion to his own ability and their wants. It may be rendered, “he shall guide his words with judgment” <sup>f1593</sup>; take care of what he says, and before whom; and that it be at a proper time and place; and especially when speaking of spiritual and religious things.

**Ver. 6.** *Surely he shall not be moved for ever*, etc.] Out of the heart of God, and from his love and affections; out of the covenant of grace, and from an interest in it; out of the hands of Christ, or off of him the foundation; out of the house and family of God; out of a state of grace and righteousness, into condemnation: and though he may be distressed by afflictions, yet not destroyed; and though he may be so shaken, as to fall from some degree of steadfastness in the faith, and into sin, yet not so as to perish everlastingly: the saint’s perseverance is a sure and certain truth, and to be depended upon.

*The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance*; with good men, and especially such whose names are recorded in Scripture: and even others are remembered after death; and for a long time after, their pious characters, sayings, actions, sufferings, works, and writings; and with God, who remembers his love to them, his covenant with them, his promises to them; has a book of remembrance for their thoughts, words, and actions; which will be remembered and spoken of at the last day, when forgotten by them; (see <sup><4109></sup>Proverbs 10:9 <sup><4186></sup>Malachi 3:16 <sup><4860></sup>Hebrews 6:10 <sup><4258></sup>Matthew 25:35) etc.

**Ver. 7.** *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings*, etc.] Either respecting things temporal; the death of friends, loss of substance, public calamities, wars and rumours of wars, commotions, confusions, convulsions, and revolutions in states, kingdoms, and nations, (~~1940E~~ Psalm 46:1-4) or things spiritual; such as are brought to him by Satan; that he is an hypocrite, and the root of the matter is not in him; for he knows him to be a liar, and the father of lies; or by his own unbelieving heart: or what will befall the churches of Christ, and the interest of religion, in the latter day; as that the outward court shall be given to the Gentiles; that the witnesses shall be slain, and an hour of temptation shall come upon all the earth; and such a time of tribulation as has not yet been; for he knows that the saints, will be kept in it, and carried through it, and glorious times will follow. Or, “he shall not be afraid of an evil hearing” <sup>f1594</sup>; of an ill report raised of himself; for he knows he must go through good report and bad report; and especially when it is a false one, and for the sake of truth and righteousness, it gives him no uneasiness: nor is he afraid of hearing the report of the law, which in some sense may be called an evil hearing or report, in opposition to the hearing of faith, or the good report of the Gospel; he is not afraid of it, when it curses, those that are under it, seeing he is redeemed by Christ from the curse of it; and therefore is not afraid of its menaces and threatenings, its curse and condemnation: nor is a good man afraid of or terrified at the tidings of death; nor will he be dismayed when the last trumpet sounds, and the dead are raised; when the heavens shall melt away with a great noise; when all shall be summoned to the judgment seat, and the wicked will hear, “Go ye cursed”, he will be under no fears of hearing such a sentence.

*His heart is fixed*; on the love of God, and is rooted and grounded in it; and is firmly persuaded of his interest in it, and that nothing can separate him from it: it is fixed on Christ the foundation; his faith is fixed and settled in him, and so are his affections; and nothing can separate from his love to him, (~~1945E~~ Romans 8:35-39). Or his heart is prepared <sup>f1595</sup>; to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments: he expects tidings of evil things, and that he shall receive evil things, as well as good, at the hands of the Lord; and therefore is not afraid of them, or surprised at them when they come; as well as his heart is prepared by the Lord to serve him, and is ready to every good work.

*Trusting in the Lord*; in his covenant God and Father, who will never leave him nor forsake him; in his grace, which is sufficient for him in the worst of

times; and who will supply all his wants: in his strength, to enable him to do his duty; to bear up under trials and exercises, and to do and suffer his will and pleasure; and in his power, to protect and preserve him, and keep him unto salvation; and in his faithfulness, to perform his promises, trusting in him for things temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The Targum is,

“trusting in the Word of the Lord;”

in Christ, the essential Word; looking to him as the author and finisher of faith; leaning upon him, laying the whole stress of his salvation on him; trusting in his person for acceptance, in his righteousness for justification, in his blood for pardon and cleansing, in his sacrifice for atonement, in his fulness for supply, and in his strength and power for assistance and protection; all which give him peace, and secure him from fear of evil tidings; (see <sup>230B</sup>Isaiah 26:3,4).

**Ver. 8.** *His heart is established*, etc.] With the doctrine of grace; which is food unto it, and by which it is strengthened and nourished; it is established in the faith of Christ, both in the grace of faith, and in the doctrine of faith, even in all the doctrines of the Gospel; so that he is not as a child, tossed to and fro with every wind; his heart is established in the exercise of grace, and he is steadfast and immovable in the discharge of duty. This being the case,

*he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies*; until he looks them in the face boldly and confidently; or until he sees them all slain and destroyed, as the Israelites saw the Egyptians on the sea shore. We supply “his desire”; it might be put “vengeance”, as in (<sup>458D</sup>Psalm 58:10), the punishment of God on wicked men, who are the enemies of the upright; and which they shall see with pleasure, because of the glory of divine justice conspicuous therein; (see <sup>682D</sup>Revelation 18:20 19:1,2) and even before this is brought about, while their enemies are oppressing them, insulting them, and triumphing over them, they shall not be afraid, as knowing the time is coming when the scene will be changed, and they shall triumph in their turn.

**Ver. 9.** *He hath dispersed*, etc.] His money, as the Targum; scattered it here and there, as the sower scatters his seed; does not throw it all in one place, but some here and some there, and all with profusion and plenty. This denotes the bounty and liberality of the upright; and his wisdom and

discretion in distributing his charity, and the numerous objects of it; (see <sup><1114></sup>Proverbs 11:14 <sup><1016></sup>2 Corinthians 9:6,9,10).

*He hath given to the poor*; that stand in need of his charity, freely, cheerfully, and bountifully.

*His righteousness endureth for ever*; his liberality continues, he is not weary of well doing; he gives a portion to seven and to eight, and to as many and as often as there is a call and need for it; (see Gill on “<sup><1113></sup>Psalm 112:3”).

*His horn shall be exalted with honour*; the reproach cast upon him shall be wiped off; he shall grow more prosperous, and become more honourable among men here on earth; and in the resurrection morning shall have the dominion over the wicked, and shall appear with Christ in glory, and be with him to all eternity.

**Ver. 10.** *The wicked shall see it*, etc.] The glory and happiness of the upright man: so when the witnesses shall ascend to heaven, a phrase expressive of a more glorious state of the church, their enemies shall behold them, (<sup><1112></sup>Revelation 11:12).

*And be grieved*; at their happiness, and grudge it: the Targum is,

“and shall be angry at him;”

the upright man.

*He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away*; like snow water <sup>f1596</sup>; or as a snail melteth, or as wax before the fire, (<sup><1107></sup>Psalm 58:7,8 68:2), shall pine away with grief and envy at the happiness and prosperity of the righteous; the wicked will weep and gnash their teeth, when they shall see them in the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves shut out, (<sup><1138></sup>Luke 13:28). The desire of the wicked shall perish; they shall not have their desire, neither of good things for themselves here and hereafter, nor of evil things for the righteous.