

PSALMS  
THAT HAVE  
IMPACTED  
MY  
LIFE  
Booklet 1

PSALM 23:1

550

**The Lord is My Shepherd**  
A PSALM OF DAVID.

**23**

- The LORD is my<sup>a</sup> shepherd; I shall not<sup>a</sup> want.  
He makes me lie down in green<sup>a</sup> pastures.  
He leads me beside still waters.<sup>a</sup>
- He<sup>a</sup> restores my soul.  
He<sup>a</sup> leads me in<sup>a</sup> paths of righteousness<sup>a</sup>  
for his<sup>a</sup> name's sake.
- Even though I<sup>a</sup> walk through the valley of<sup>a</sup> the shadow of death,<sup>a</sup>  
I will<sup>a</sup> fear no evil,  
for<sup>a</sup> you are with me;  
your<sup>a</sup> rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.
- You<sup>a</sup> prepare a table before me  
in<sup>a</sup> the presence of my enemies;  
you<sup>a</sup> anoint my head with oil;  
my<sup>a</sup> cup overflows.
- Surely<sup>a</sup> goodness and mercy<sup>a</sup> shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall<sup>a</sup> dwell<sup>a</sup> in the house of the LORD  
forever.<sup>a</sup>

IAN PIKE

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this book to my precious wife of 53 years who has had such a profound effect on me. Since she went to heaven I have been able to more clearly articulate the qualities that made her so special. She was a Godly humble person who had no false opinion of herself and because of this people felt so secure around her for she never criticized anyone and she always listened. She taught me how to forgive for she never carried a grudge, every day was a new day and the past was the past. She was trustworthy and never disclosed anything spoken in confidence to her. She had such an unshakeable faith in God and she expressed it by the way that she lived – not by just being able to talk about it. I am reminded of this as I write this in the unit that in the natural was impossible to buy, but Barbara heard from God and a miracle happened. Today I love the Lord so much because he brought Barbara into my life.

## **Psalms That Have Impacted my life**

All scriptures quoted are New King James Version unless otherwise note

## Introduction

The book of Psalms is very unique in the Bible, there is no other book like it even though the Psalms were written by many different people we know that all scripture is inspired by God. All the Psalms were written as songs to be sung normally on special occasions and were used to glorify God. I have titled this booklet "Psalms that have impacted my life", over my lifetime I have been so impacted by the Psalms because God has used several verses from the Psalms to encourage me at various stages of my life. In my 20's/30's this verse had such an impact on me it is what David said in **Psalm 27:14** *"I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of God in the land of the living"*. Not only in my younger years but all my life I have experienced the goodness of God they are too many to write about. In my senior years, I have experienced the truth of **Psalm 92: 13-14** which says: *"Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of the Lord. They shall bear fruit in old age, they shall be fresh and flourishing"*. This is so true in my life, especially after the unexpected loss of my wife of 53 years, and now at the age of 83, I am so

thrilled with the Lord and how precious He is to me. I am so encouraged by what the Lord is doing in the church. We must never forget that the word of God is a living word that continues to speak to us. When David was anointed to be king of Israel as a teenager, God said in **1 Samuel 13:14** “ *The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart*”. We look at the history of David we little evidence of this however when we read the many Psalms that David wrote we get a glimpse of David’s love for his Lord and living His way. David writes about the situations that he faced and how his trust in the Lord shines through. This should be normal behaviour for us as we talk to people about how great the Lord is to us. The anointing that is on our lives should be impacting the people with who we are in contact. The purpose of this booklet is to inspire you, as you are impacted by the truth of God’s word we are changed and we can be impacted every time we read it. The wonderful thing about God’s word is because it is alive, it will always speak to us. In this first booklet, I have written about Psalm 23, Psalm 1, Psalm 19, Psalm 51 and Psalm 92. It is my desire and prayer that this booklet will inspire you to desire to pursue the Lord with everything that you have. The Lord is certainly worth pursuing and He uses His word to encourage us.

## Chapter 1 Psalm 23

This psalm of David is probably the one that is best known for it is often quoted at church on special occasions. I believe the truth and application of this psalm are so relevant to the unprecedented season of life that the world is now experiencing. This psalm is one of hope and encouragement and it is important to take the time to understand what it means for it uses the word shepherd in a way that we do not use in our everyday living. He. This is what he was doing when his father asked him to take food to his brothers, who were in Saul's army, while he was at the battleground delivering the food he killed Goliath because he defied his God. It was also revealed that he had killed a lion and a bear who had come to attack the sheep. I want to now look at **Verse 1** which says: *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want"* **NLT** *"The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything that I need"* **AMP** *"The Lord is my shepherd – to feed, guide and shield me; I shall not lack"*. The first thing that caught my attention is the phrase 'The Lord is ' – here it states very clearly that the Lord is in control now. This is such a comfort in the season we find ourselves in. It is so good to understand that COVID 19 did not take the Lord by surprise so if we allow Him to order our lives and the way that we live

then we have nothing to fear. The big issue is – will I allow Him to be Lord of my life. When Jesus was on the earth, He challenged the people in **Luke 6:46** which says: *“But why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’, and do not do the things which I say”*. As we look at this we know that the sheep always obeyed the shepherd. The statement ‘The Lord is’ is so comforting because it means that I can relax and not worry because the Lord has everything under control. The next thing that impacted me was the word ‘My’ – it is so good to realize that I am special and important to Him. It is my relationship with the Lord that counts – while there are multiple millions alive today the Lord does not treat us as a group but as an individual and that individual is important to Him. With our natural understanding, we tend to look at people and place importance on them based on their ability – God does not see us that way – everyone is precious in His sight. Next, the verse declares what ‘the Lord is’ – He is my shepherd. This statement needs a thorough explanation because our concept of a shepherd today is different from the role of a shepherd in biblical times. A shepherd would look after a flock of sheep usually about 100 sheep in number and would be with them every hour of the day. He would provide a safe place for them to rest at night which was called a fold and he would sleep in the entrance to protect the sheep. Every

day he would lead the sheep to the best pasture with plenty of water. The shepherd would protect them from wild animals and the sheep learned to follow his voice and were comforted by his presence. In **John 10:1-30** Jesus taught that He was the good shepherd and that He would lay down His life for His sheep. The final truth that this verse declares is because He is my shepherd the Lord would provide everything that I need. In this season of so much uncertainty, we can relax because the Lord has promised that He would lead and provide for us everything that we need – all we need to do is to be certain that we are one of His sheep.

## Psalm 23 Part 2

As we continue to look at this psalm everything is based on the understanding that “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want (I shall not lack, I have everything that I need)”. This has been my experience in my life, especially the last seven years when I have had to live without my precious wife of 53 years – going from living on a double pension to a single pension while most of my expenses still were the same. During this time I have experienced the provision of my shepherd. **Verse 2** says *“He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters”*. I have discovered that sheep do not lie down of their own accord – they like to keep moving on. This is why the bible says that the shepherd makes his sheep to lie down. In the world in which we live there is great pressure to perform and to keep performing. As I look back over my lifetime there were times when I got caught on the merry-go-round of working long hours then my health suffered. I became short-tempered and my family life and marriage suffered. I am so glad that God gave me a good wife who helped me to live a more balanced life. God places so much importance on resting – after He created the world in 6 days he then rested. **Genesis 2:3** says: *“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it”*. Because

in it He rested from all His works which God had created and made. When the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt God gave His people laws to live by – in **Exodus 20:8 – 11**, God said “Remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy, etc. While today we do not live under the law the way that we live should meet the requirements of the law. **Hebrews 4:9-11a** says: *“There remains, therefore, a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered his rest, has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. Let us, therefore, be diligent to enter that rest”*. Jesus said in **Matthew 11:28** *“Come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”*. Jesus has a plan of rest for your life. One last scripture about resting **Psalms 16:9b** says: *“ My flesh shall also rest in hope”*. It is good to remember the difference between sheep and us – sheep can be made to obey – obedience to God is our choice. The second part of this verse is – He leads me beside still waters (Peaceful streams ). The shepherd leads the sheep to the best place to quench their thirst. I am reminded of an adage that says: “You can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink”. It is our choice if we quench our thirst. **Psalms 42:1-2** says: *“As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for you O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God”*. Today we have many choices for what to drink to try and satisfy our

thirst. Jesus said in **John 4:10b** that “He is the living water” and in **John 4:14** He said: “*But whoever drinks of the water that I give will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life*”. I am so glad that the Lord has provided rest for us and allows us to be satisfied by drinking the living water.

## Psalm 23 Part 3

Now as I continue with the truth of this Psalm. It is good to be reminded that “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”. Also, sheep were reliant completely on the shepherd for all their needs and followed the shepherd’s voice. **Psalm 23:3** says: “*He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake*”. **NLT** “ *He renews my strength, He guides me along right paths, bringing honour to His Name*”. This verse is so encouraging and shows how much the shepherd cares for his sheep. Firstly the verse says that He restores – today there are so many programs on TV showing various things being restored. They all have one thing in common, they all try to bring back what they are working on to its original condition. This is what God is doing in us He wants us to return to the relationship He had with Adam. It is so good to recognise that when Jesus died on the cross and rose again He broke the power of Satan forever. Unfortunately, there are times by our actions we do not believe this and we live a life that is not victorious and as such without joy. In this verse, it is good to be reminded of the authority of the good shepherd, note this verse is a statement of fact, not possibilities. While I choose to be His sheep He makes me new, another

word that could be used is refreshed. This is something He does every day, He refreshes me. As I look at the meaning of the word 'Soul' most commentaries suggest it means 'The whole person'. This is so encouraging for I understand that He, restores, and refreshes renew the whole of me so that I am complete in Him. Secondly, the next part of this verse shows the importance of our choices, this verse does not say He makes us but that He leads or guides us He shows us the way and it is up to us to choose to go that way when we do it brings such pleasure to the Lord. At times there seem to be so many distractions so it is a constant challenge to hear the shepherd's voice and live God's way. Something else we forget is that when we choose to live God's way we honour Him. I am so glad that he provides the best for me. Because He knows how I am made He provides that which pleases me and causes me to desire in an ever-increasing measure to live His way. It is good to pause and look over a lifetime and acknowledge how He has led and guided me through all aspects of life. I am so glad that the Lord is my shepherd.

## Psalm 23 Part 4

I am so encouraged by the truth of God's word, it does not give a partial view of life but explains that life is not always a bed of roses. **Psalm 23:4** says "*Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me*". As I look back over my lifetime there have been many difficult times that I have had to go through. This is where I rejoice that the Lord has been my shepherd and that I have made Him Lord and saviour of my life. **Matthew 5:45** says "*That you may be sons of your Father in heaven, for He makes His sun rise on the evil and good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust*". This verse reminds us that while we live on the earth there will be good and bad times and this happens to good and bad people. While as I look back over my life I know that there have been many severe trials, the good thing is that I have to think hard to remember them because the past is not of my everyday living. The verse starts with the fact that it will be our experience, the verse starts with the fact that there will be trials that we will experience, but the verse also declares that we do not stop at our trials. It is sad when people choose to stay there and every time you talk to them all they talk about is their problems. The next thing the

verse declares is that we walk through bad situations. Walking speaks of taking time but not stopping and always being on the move. This verse reinforces the truth that God always makes a way of escape (**1Corinthians 10:13**). This verse highlights that we are going through a valley, in the bible a valley is usually a fertile place, so it is important to understand those seemingly hard situations are an opportunity to experience God's goodness. The Psalmist is quite adamant that in the tough times he will fear no evil. It is good to be reminded that God is in control. **Matthew 28:10** says *"Then Jesus spoke to them (His disciples), saying' All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth"*. It does not matter what our situation looks like Jesus is in control with all authority. The Psalmist makes it very clear the reason that he does not fear the good shepherd is with him. As we are living in this season of a pandemic while the god of this world is trying to create a climate of uncertainty and fear. It does not matter what it seems to look like we have nothing to fear. The verse concludes with the reason for the sheep's confidence, "Your rod and staff they comfort me", this is very interesting because the staff and the rod were used to make certain that the sheep obeyed the shepherd, they were instruments of correction. But the sheep took comfort that they were

being led by the shepherd in the right direction. This is what God is doing all the time, His way is always the best.

## Psalm 23 Part 5

In the previous verse, we were encouraged by the fact that when hard times come the Lord is with us. This verse continues on the theme that in life there will be times when we are under attack. I am encouraged by the honesty of God's word it does not cover up the fact that at times living with Jesus will have its challenges. It is interesting to note that in the middle ages people built monasteries to isolate them from problems and attacks of being a Christian. **Psalm 23:5** says: *"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows"*. **NLT** says: *"You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You welcome me as a guest anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings"*. The psalmist did not fear the trial because he knew that the Lord was with him, this verse shows the reward of his actions. It is important to note that the Lord does not wait for the trial to be over before he rewards us. Let us now look at how the Lord rewards us, firstly, He prepares a table/ feast for us. In the bible, a feast represented a time of great honour, feasts were not casual events they were given to bestow great honour on the guest of the feast. A good example of this is in the story of the prodigal son, the father made a

great feast to celebrate the return of his son. When the son came home he was not punished for his wrong behaviour but was celebrated that he was still alive. This is something that we fail to see God wants to honour us when we stand in the hard times. There is another important part of the feast was the guest was rewarded openly, all the people attending supported the celebration of the guest. Another practice of honouring the guest was his head was anointed with oil. It is important to realise that God's hand in your life is visible to others. While anointing may seem a strange custom to us it was part of the declaration that the guest was honoured. It cannot be overstated that when we make Jesus Lord of our lives it brings great pleasure to our heavenly Father. In the gospels, we read that Jesus reprimanded the Pharisees for not anointing Him with oil when He arrived as their guest at the feast. The final thing that the psalmist declares is that your cup overflows with blessings. God is such a rewarder and His reward is not small but big. The danger we face is at times we can focus on the darkness of the trial that we fail to see that God is blessing us in a significant way. If we have a cup that is overflowing then the contents of the cup will be always fresh and that is so true with the Lord, our blessings are not only bountiful but fresh. I am so glad that the Lord is my shepherd because it does not

matter the circumstances I find myself in my shepherd is always with me.

## Psalm 23 Part 6

As we come to the last verse of this great Psalm it is good to remember how the previous verses have been so comforting and encouraging to us. This is no surprise because that is the nature of our God. **Psalm 23:6** says: *“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”*. The first thing that stands out in this verse is the word the psalmist uses to commence the verse – the word ‘surely’. Here the psalmist makes a statement of fact, not suggesting that something could happen. This is an opportunity to understand and declare that everything about God is certain, and there is no place for doubting and being uncertain in our understanding of who God is. We must be very clear that doubt comes from Satan and always be ready to recognise the source of doubt and uncertainty in our understanding and not allow it to be part of how we live. What was the psalmist certain about? – He was certain that he would experience the Lord’s goodness and mercy all the days of his life. Before we look at the significance of these Godly attributes it is important to look at how we experience them. This verse states that these attributes follow us, they are not in front of us, this is where our faith in God is displayed, if we can see and know what is

ahead we do not have to trust the Lord. We understand that the Lord has promised that He will never leave or forsake us (**Hebrews 13: 5b**). The psalmist was certain that goodness would be with him all the time because goodness is the nature of God. This is something that we can forget because of all the evil that is around us. God is a good God so it is important to continually remind ourselves of this fact because at times we can take it for granted. The next attribute that continually follows us is His mercy, a better translation would be compassion. We understand from the Bible that Jesus was moved with compassion and He has not changed, and we are in His sight and are following us all the time. I am encouraged by the phrase “All the days of my life”, this is what Jesus said in **Matthew 28:20** “*And lo, I am with you always*”. We have nothing to be afraid of because He is always with us. The final statement is so profound – “Forever I will dwell in the house of the Lord”, the house of the Lord speaks of the place of His presence. Today this verse is reminding us that His presence never leaves us, and this is something that we all need to work on – how to be continually aware of His presence. This is why it is so important to set aside time regularly to switch off the events of the day and allow His presence to become real to us. It has been so refreshing to look at this psalm and to be reminded that

“The Lord is my shepherd” and because of this I can live a blessed life.

## Chapter 2 Psalm 1

The title of this Psalm is “The way of the righteous and the end of the ungodly”. This psalm is unusual in the fact that it declares God’s plan for our lives and the result if we live by His way or reject His way of living. The starting point is that we understand that God wants to bless us but His blessing is conditional on the way that we live. While it is true that God forgives and forgets sin, we must never forget that our actions have consequences, for example, when I am driving I choose not to stop at the red light and hit another car and the driver dies, although I am forgiven by God, I still will have to spend time in jail because of my behaviour. It is easy at times to take for granted the way God loves us and desires to bless us. **Verse 1** commences with “*Blessed is the man*”, the word blessed means ‘the happiness we experience when we are going in the right direction or on the right path’. while God wants to bless us He very clearly tells of behaviour that will deprive us of that blessing. The first behaviour is “*Who walks in the counsel of the ungodly*”. We must be aware of the danger that there is so much ungodly counsel today. The media is full of fake news and false agendas, we are bombarded by unproven opinions of people on social media, and the same thing applies to the internet. This

is where our walk with the Lord is so precious and must be guarded at all costs. I am surprised by how many people that I know can easily talk about conspiracy theories as facts but never talk about how great the Lord is in their lives. They have chosen to walk in the counsel of the ungodly. Next, we are warned “*not to sit with sinners*”, this speaks about being comfortable with ungodly ways and I noticed some of those people quoting scripture to justify their actions. It is not about how much we know about the bible but about having a daily life-changing experience with the Lord. I am reminded of **Psalm 119:11** which says: “*Your word have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against you*”. This is where it is essential to experience the freshness of the Lord daily. The final warning is: “*Not to sit in the seat of the scornful*”. For many years I thought it was my right to find fault with the governments, the way churches were managed and the way people lived. I excused myself because of my technical background – I was trained to analyse things. It took a major encounter with God to understand – what I was doing was judging people and that was against God’s way for my life. This is something that I must guard against and not allow to be part of my life. “Scornful” means to hold in contempt or disdain, and this should never be part of the way that we live as such be very careful not to sit with people

with that attitude. This attitude is ungodly and we know that ungodly ways should not be part of the that we live. It is so important that we are not contaminated by ungodly ways. I am so glad that God makes it very clear the behaviour that takes us away from being blessed.

## Psalm 1 Part 2

In the previous part, we looked at that although God wants to bless us it is not without certain conditions. He is very clear that certain behaviour stops Him from blessing us. Now we look at the attitude that pleases God and God blesses people with that attitude. **Verse 2** says: *“But he delights in the law of the Lord, and in His law, he meditates day and night”*. To put this into practice it is a choice that we make and do not allow other things to sidetrack us from meditating on God’s word. It is important to note that this verse does not talk about reading but about meditating on God’s word. To meditate is to continually ponder or chew over and over again. This is not a one-off experience but a continual lifestyle experience. This is so relevant today because we have so much pressure on us and the way that we live. This is where discipline is so important, for when we choose what is most important to us then we have the resolve to make it happen. For me, this is a constant battle, but what I have experienced is the more I persist, the more fulfilling it becomes. I have learned that when I stop doing what I am involved in, I automatically start reflecting on and praising the Lord. Joshua was instructed in **Joshua 1:8** that if he was to be successful then he had to meditate on God’s word day

and night. It is easy for us at times not to believe the importance of meditating and then cannot understand why our relationship with the Lord suffers. There is no substitute for meditating on God's word, and when we do the bible is very clear about God's reward for meditating. **Verse 3** says: *"He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper"*. I am so encouraged by the certainty of this verse, it is not a suggestion of what is possible but a statement of fact. It is good to be reminded that God does not lie, but is a rewarder for those who diligently seek Him (**Hebrews 11:6**). In biblical times trees were very important to everyone and the secret to growing good trees was the availability of a reliable water source. The bible is very clear and states that the tree is planted not by one source of water but many, the word used is "rivers" and that is the same word that Jesus used to describe being full of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of trees was twofold, firstly, it was to provide fruit in its season and next to provide shade. As I look back over my life I have experienced many seasons and now I am living in a new season which has been very fruitful. The important thing has been to recognise that in each season there should be fruit produced. Also, the tree produced continuous shade – its leaf does not

wither, this declares how our relationship with the Lord when it is continuous people come and be encouraged by you. The final reward is outstanding “And whatsoever he does shall prosper”. When we are close to the Lord we are continually blessed, and as I look back over my life I can gladly say that I have been truly blessed.

## Psalm 1 Part 3

As we come to the third week of the new year I want to complete Psalm 1 which I commenced at the end of last year. This psalm is so relevant to the world in which we live because it declares that while God desires to bless this psalm is very clear in portraying the behaviour of people which God does not bless. During the last two years, the world which we know has changed and unfortunately, many Christians have been convinced to follow the way of the world. The god of this world (Satan) has deceived so many through the impact of false news and the promotion of fear. There was a time when I allowed myself to drift away from being close to the Lord and suffered from loneliness and wondered what was going on. This is where I am so thankful that I have chosen to follow Jesus and the God-given opportunity to write about the Lord regularly has inspired me to be continually passionate about my Lord. Part 2 was so inspiring looking at the ways God blesses us and now Part 3 is sad but necessary to be very clear that we cannot please ourselves and do whatever we please and expect God to bless us. This is one of the traps of Satan when he convinces us that we are important and as such can please ourselves. Unfortunately, we live in a church age where sin and its

consequences are rarely mentioned and people are not taught what Godly living looks like. Now we come to **verse 4** which states: “The ungodly are not so” – this is a very precise and clear statement, while **verse 2&3** declares the blessing of the righteous, this verse makes it very clear that there is a vast difference between the righteous and the ungodly. It is time for the church to change and teach the difference between being Godly and ungodly. God makes it very clear the ungodly do not share in the benefits of the godly which are so great. As I talk with people at church I am surprised by how few people are bubbling over with their relationship with the Lord. When I became born again I became a new person and have continued becoming a new person in Christ all my life. This psalm declares three aspects of ungodly living, firstly they are like chaff which the wind blows away, next, they are not part of the congregation of the righteous, and finally, their way of being ungodly shall perish. When you look at these three areas, the ungodly have no spiritual stability, they continually change to suit their current situation and have no part of righteous living but they try to fit into church life without changing. Finally, their end is bleak as they perish, there is no afterlife pleasure for them. The psalm concludes with “*The Lord knows the way of the righteous*”, the hand of the Lord is upon those who love

Him and this has been my experience for almost 68 years of being blessed by God.

## Chapter 3 Psalm 19

While there are many reasons why the many Psalmists wrote their various psalms, Psalm 19 is very unique. The title of this psalm is “The Perfect Revelation of the Lord”, so it will be with great interest to see how David achieves this in this psalm. David does not try to use something new to do this but uses something very familiar to get our attention. We live at a time when we have allowed ourselves to be dominated by new things, a significant part of the world’s economy is based on people always buying new things which are not essential to how they live. David reminds us that it is not things that glorify God’s name but what He has created. This is why the god of this world (Satan) has made such an unrelenting assault with misinformation to get the world as a whole to accept that there is no creation. Evolution takes God out of everything that we could be captivated by because God’s creation is so captivating and when we see what God has created we become overwhelmed by the greatness of God. This psalm demonstrates the fact that all scriptures are inspired by God because David wrote things that were way past his natural understanding. In David’s time when he looked at the sky and saw the sun during the day and the moon at night and had a few glimpses of the stars – he had no

idea of the greatness of God's creation. **Verse 1** declares: *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament (Sky) shows His handiwork"*. There is an adage "Familiarity breeds contempt" and unfortunately this is so true and applies to the way that we live if we do not take stock of how we live regularly. There is a great danger that we can take the people close to us for granted and we need to be on guard against it. As I was preparing to write this blog about psalm 19 I was challenged by the thought "When was the last time I was in awe of God's creation" and the simple answer was a long time ago. What surprised me was all this happened while I am committed to loving God and appreciating His love for me. When I considered His creation I realise how small I am in the whole of God's plan, this is not a putdown but helps keep my ego in check, for Satan wants us to feel important. "The heavens (Galaxies) declare the glory of God", the definition of a galaxy is "A band of stars encircling the heavens". When I was growing up scientists had discovered a couple of galaxies but now have discovered many more and are building new equipment to discover even more. It is so marvellous the way the earth is positioned to support life, these are things that we do not see but experience the greatness of God

without being aware of it. Now is a good time to pause and be aware of the greatness of our God!

## Psalm 19 Part 2

I am so encouraged by the reason for this psalm – to reveal the Lord! As I have reflected on this I realise that there were times when I desired something spectacular to happen in the church to make the church attractive to the world. This psalm reminds us of what God has already done and is visible to us so that we can exalt the Lord. I am challenged not to take God's creation for granted but to take the time to consider how great is God's creation. **Verses 2 -6** give us an explanation for our reaction when we are enthralled by His creation. **Verse 2** says: *“Day unto day utters speech and the night reveals knowledge”*. When we are captivated by the wonder of His creation this verse says that as we take note of the greatness of God we are impacted, this observation speaks to us. This is something that I have lacked at times not acknowledging that God's greatness is right in front of me. Certainly, I am changed when I see His greatness it is a good idea to allow God's creation to speak to us and give us His Knowledge. **Verse 3** is very interesting for it says: *“There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard”*. This is a very strange statement but very revealing. The psalmist is declaring there is no part of the world that God is not speaking to people. The same idea is

expressed in **Verse 4** which says: *“Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them, He has set a tabernacle for the sun”*. **NLT** *“The sun lives in the heavens where God has placed it”*. It is good to understand that God gives everyone everywhere the opportunity to acknowledge the greatness of God. It is also important to be reminded of the position of the sun, it is the perfect position to support life on earth. The more you look at God’s creation. The more you realise that there is so much that we do not know. The same can be said about our relationship with the Lord – there is so much more that we can experience when we are not caught up with the hustle and bustle of life. **Verse 5** gives an interesting allegory of how God’s creation affects people: *“Which is like a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race”*. This is a very interesting statement – it refers to the Bridegroom who has experienced the pleasure of being with his wife for the first time there are very few words that can explain that feeling. This is how God wants us to react when we see the greatness of His creation. Next, it reminds us that when we have properly prepared for a race we cannot wait for the race to commence because the built-up expectation can be realised. **Verse 6** says: *“ Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the*

*other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat”.*  
This verse reinforces the truth that no one can say that they have not been impacted by God and that they have chosen to live a life that does not please God. I am encouraged by the fact that there is so much to learn about the greatness of God when we see and experience His creation.

## Psalm 19 Part 3

It has been so encouraging to be reminded of the greatness of our God through His creation, now we come to another aspect of that greatness. **Verse 7** says: *“The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple”*. This verse declares that God’s way is perfect, this means if we want to be completely satisfied there is only one way to achieve this and that is living according to God’s word. How sad it is when we try to live in our strength and try to add Christian principles to our life. It does not work and we must conclude that there is only one way and that is God’s way. The sooner we come to this conclusion the quicker we find out that living God’s way is the best. The verse goes on to say that God’s way converts the soul. The word convert has a powerful meaning, it means: “to turn back or revert to the starting point”. We know the starting point was when Adam and Eve had no sin so they had a great relationship with God. We know that when they sinned their sin separated them from God and we need to be minded of what Jesus achieved when He died on the cross for our sins and rose again on the third day. Sin’s power was broken forever and we only sin because we choose to sin not because sin has any power over us.

This truth is fundamental to our committing our life to the Lord, this is why the expression “Born Again” is used – I start my Christian life a completely new person. **Verse 8** says: *“The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the Lord are pure, enlightening the eyes”*. This verse has the truth we need to apply to the way that we live because we live in a world with so much make-believe. People are influenced by social media which for the most part portrays false images, the news media is biased and false, so in this environment, we can become dissatisfied with the truth. There is a danger that we apply these false principles to God and that is so wrong. This verse reminds us that God’s way is right and there are no exceptions to this, God’s word is true and if we are a follower of the Lord then our total focus is on living His way because it is the right way to live. There is a pleasure we experience when we wholeheartedly follow the Lord. The verse goes on to say that God’s way is pure and because of this we can be seen. **Verse 9** says: *“The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether”*. The fear of the Lord is not being afraid but the overwhelming respect and honour we have for Him which motivates us to stay close to Him and live by His standards. When we live this way we experience a God-

given cleanness, it is so good to have nothing between us and the Lord. Next, it says the Lord's standards are true and righteous altogether. I believe we miss out on such great fellowship with the Lord because part of us wants to be in control and try to live as we did before we were born again. Now is the right time to change our thinking and follow the Lord's way with all of our hearts.

## Psalm 19 Part 4

As we continue with this psalm it is good to be reminded of the purpose for this psalm, David wrote it with the express purpose of revealing the true nature of the Lord. This is something that we need to do regularly because at times we take for granted His great love for us and we get caught up with the affairs of this world. **Verse 10** says: *“More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb”*. This verse clarifies to us the importance of the Lord’s way and how to live to please the Lord by the way that we live. We live in a world with so many distractions and pressure to live in a contrary way to the way of the Lord. This is something that we cannot relax about because the god of this world is always putting things in front of us to distract us if we allow ourselves to be distracted. Unfortunately, I see many people distracted from putting the Lord first. This is a great challenge that we have and must always be choosing to put the Lord first in our lives or we try to add Christian concepts to the way that we live. The verse commences with the phrase ‘More to be desired’, this is the focal point of how we live. As I look back over my lifetime I have always found the time for what I believed that was important to me at any time. The real

issue we face is not whether we have time or not but what is most important to me. This is why David said “more to be desired “ because he had experienced other things than his passion for the Lord to dominate his life for a short period. The real issue is what am I desiring, this is a choice that we can only make for ourselves. Look what God’s ways are compared to, gold is most valuable and when it comes to sweetness nothing surpasses honey. But while the psalmist reminds us in the natural these things are important they cannot be compared with the pleasure and satisfaction that is found in living God’s way with all our strength. I have found this to be so true especially since my wife of 53 years went to heaven – the comfort and support I have experienced have been outstanding. Then we come to **verse 11** which says: *“Moreover by them, your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward”*. **Psalm 119:11** says: *“Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you”*. Being aware of the importance of God’s ways helps us to live right in all situations. I cannot overemphasize the reward there is when we live God’s way with all of our hearts. Over the years I have been told by people who are close to me that I take living with Jesus too seriously, to which I respond that I do not take living with Jesus serious enough. The reality is you cannot be too serious about

the Lord, His way is the best way to live, and we were created to have fellowship with Him. Now is a good time to assess how important Jesus is to me and do everything in our power to put Him first in our lives.

## Psalm 19 Part 5

This psalm has been so inspiring and also challenging as we have considered the revelation of the Lord through His creation and His word. **Verse 11** says: *“Moreover by them, your servant is warned, and in keeping them is great reward”*. Sometimes we forget how by living by God’s word we have been saved from so much it is good to remember the blessings of God. I believe because we have lived the right way we have been protected from so much. I do not know if in heaven these events will be revealed to us and if they are we will have even a greater reason to praise our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Verse 12** says: *“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me my secret faults”*. This has been my experience as I have looked back over my life many things have been done regularly which have taken me away from living close to my Lord. It is not something that I planned to do but at times became complacent and have allowed the things of this world to be my priority. I am so glad that the Lord cleanses me from all my faults when I acknowledge them and repent. **Verse 13** says: *“Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgressions”*. Another name for presumptuous sins is

living by my strength, logic, and understanding and this is one of the battles we face continually. I am amazed how at times I allow myself to be tricked to believe in my self-importance and that always takes me away from a close relationship with my Lord. The Bible calls this pride, notice the middle letter of pride is 'l' and God is very clear that "He resists the proud"(1 Peter 5:5). This is something that we have to be very careful about because the spirit of this world is all about the power of self and we are reminded not to conform to this world's standards (Romans 12:2 ). God's solution is found in Verse 14 which says: *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer "*. Sometimes we forget the significance of what we say and upon reflection, it is good to be reminded what we say is important and what the Bible says we say, Proverbs 10:21 says: *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue"*. Proverbs 10:11 says: *"The mouth of the righteous is a well of life"* and Proverbs 15:4 says: *"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life"*. It is also important to recognise the source of what we say, Luke 6:45 says: *"For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks"*. This brings us to the next part of the verse which says: *"Let the meditation of our heart be acceptable in your sight"*, the word meditate means to

chew over or more simply 'what we think about '. Because this seems to be hidden from other people we can be tempted not to place great value on what we think. However, what we think about is manifested by what we say. The psalmist reminds us to keep our thoughts under control and to only think about those things that glorify God. The Lord is revealed to other people when we think of Godly ways.

## Chapter 4 Psalm 51

Before I look at this psalm in detail, because of the uniqueness of the psalm and its message it is *important to look at the background and reason for this psalm*. The story is found in **2 Samuel chapters 11 & 12** and there are many issues for us to consider. It goes like this, every year David would lead his army to fight the enemy and had been very successful, Israel was being enlarged year by year. After 20 years of this routine, David decided to stay at home and rest instead of leading his army to battle. One night when he could not sleep he went up to the rooftop to refresh himself, there he saw his next-door neighbour's wife taking a bath, instead of looking away, he sent his servant to get her and committed adultery with her. Because of that union, she became pregnant and so to cover up his sin sent for the husband to come home, but Uriah was a man of integrity – he would not sleep with his wife while his fellow soldiers slept on the ground. So, David, had him killed in battle, after a time of mourning David married Bathsheba, then the baby was born and later he died. David thought that he had gotten away with his sinful acts until the Lord sent the prophet Nathan and exposed his wrong deeds. Later on, Bathsheba had a

son and his name was Solomon the Lord chose him to be the next king after David. It is difficult to understand how a man after God's own heart could be so far from God to do what he did. The starting point of David's sin was when he got tired of fighting, nothing would have happened if he was fighting the enemy. This is one of the tricks of Satan in that he tries to convince us not to take our Christian life too serious, and there are many other things that we can do. As I look back over my life there have been times when I have backed off and have found it hard again to have that passion for the Lord and put Him first in my life. The longer we stay lukewarm the easier it is to justify the way that we live because we start comparing ourselves to others not to what the bible says about living with Jesus. Backing off is something that I guard against and I am saddened by the number of people who believe it is alright to retire from being passionate for the Lord in the church. There are so many people that could be setting a Godly example to the next generation. The other thing to understand is the power of true repentance. Bathsheba was the mother of Solomon who was to be the next king after David, this means in God's plan for David's life he was to marry her – he just went about it the wrong way. Because he truly repented, the wrong that he committed did not stop God's plan for his life from

taking place. This is so encouraging to me for I know my sins are gone and nothing is stopping me from reaching the plan and purpose God has for my life. In the next part, we will look at this psalm which is called “A prayer of repentance”.

## Psalm 51 Part 2

In this psalm, we see the true character of David and as we look at his response to God for the sin that he had committed, there are many lessons for us to learn. We need to understand the biblical meaning of repentance, in the Old Testament it means to “turn around” and this was the meaning I understood for most of my life. The New Testament meaning is “To change the way that we think” which is very profound and challenges me to examine myself and ask the question have I repented? While we can feel sorry for what we have done, feeling sorry does not mean that we have repented – we have to change the way that we think to repent. As we look at the psalm we see that David's action closely aligns with the New Testament meaning of repentance. Before we look at in detail what David wrote there is one thing that stands out – he did not try to justify or excuse his behaviour, he admitted that what he had done was wrong. This highlights a very important attitude to guard against – if we do something that is not right there can be the danger of trying to justify our actions and try not to do it again but that is not repentance. Now let us look at the first two verses of this psalm which say: *“Have mercy upon me, O God,*

*according to your loving-kindness; according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin*". David highlights a most important consideration – he declared the greatness of God's nature – it is easy at times to forget His great love and compassion for us. Recently I watched a three-minute video that portrayed the suffering of Jesus, I came away in awe of my Saviour who loved me so much to suffer that way. David also recognised that God was the only one who could cleanse him from his transgressions. He realised that God was the only one that could cleanse him from his sin so that he could live the rest of his life in fellowship with his Lord. Next in verses 3 & 4a, he says: *"For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done this evil in your sight"*. While other people were affected by David's wrong behaviour, he declared that it was against God that he had sinned. At times it is easy to excuse our behaviour in the environment in which we live but the bottom line is that when we sin, we sin against God. In David's position as king, it would have been easy for him to justify his actions but he did not want to cover up his wrong actions – he wanted to have a close relationship with his Lord. This is a great lesson for us, we must

guard against any attitude that stops our close relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for that is how we enjoy our salvation.

## Psalm 51 Part 3

In this psalm, David warns of our sinful nature – we were born sinners. Understanding this is not an excuse for us to sin but a warning of something that we need to guard against. This is why it is so important not to be dominated by our instincts and keep reminding ourselves that we are born again and as such sin has no power over us, it is against our spiritual nature to sin, it is something that we have to choose to do. **Verse 6** says: *“Behold you desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part you will make me know wisdom”* **NLT** *“But you desire honesty for the heart, so you can teach me to be wise in my innermost being”*. This verse exposes the source of our strength, it is not how mentally tough we are but whether we are led by our spirit or mind. This exposes where the battle is won or lost because at times we are not honest with ourselves. It can be so easy to justify our actions in our mind and with our mind, we compare ourselves to other people. This is a very dangerous way to live because this is living by our strength and not living by the spirit. David declares without reservation that God wants us to be honest with our assessment of whether we are living as a spiritual person or by our natural ability. Unless we are honest with ourselves and live a spiritual life, then

we cannot experience Godly wisdom which is essential for us to enjoy our relationship with the Lord. I am intrigued that David calls the place where God functions the inward part, this means we have to be careful of what we display to the world because the world is fascinated by external expression and we must be on guard not to be a superficial person. The psalm goes on to say that when we are clean before the Lord we are full of joy and gladness, this is why repentance is so important to the way that we live, acknowledging our sin is the key to experiencing a joyful Christian experience. I am reminded that when my sins are forgiven by God, He remembers them no more. Just because my memory can remember events of the past does not mean that God has not forgiven me. The next verse I want to look at is **verse 10** which says: *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me”*. This verse reinforces the truth of repentance in our lives – it is not trying harder not to sin but becoming a new person in Christ. David desired that God would make him a new person so that he would not continue to sin – he did not want sin to be part of the way that he lived and this should be how we want to live. The final thing that David desired from God was to renew a steadfast spirit in him. The word steadfast means to be constant and unwavering, this is

how God wants us to live, totally predictable in all circumstances of life because we live with a clean heart.

## Psalm 51 Part 4

After David requested that God would change him, he wondered how God would treat him now that he had committed such a great sin. In **Verse 11** he asks the Lord not to cast him away from his presence. He considered living in God's presence and having a relationship with his Lord as the most important part of his life. He was sorry that he had allowed himself to drift away from God to the extent that he could commit such a sin and he did not want that to happen again. He cried out in **verse 12** *"Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your generous Spirit"*. When there is nothing between us and the Lord it is a joyful experience that we enjoy daily. **Isaiah 12:3** declares: *"Therefore with joy, you will draw water from the wells of salvation"*. This is a good warning to us, if our Christian experience starts to become routine and out of habit it is time to stop and find out what we are doing that has squeezed the joy of the Lord out of our living. It is interesting to see what David wanted to do when he was full of the joy of the Lord. In **verse 13** we read that he wanted sinners to be converted. We must never forget the power of our testimony when we are full of the joy of being born again. When our experience with the Lord is genuine we stand out for all the right

reasons. In **Verse 15** David declared that his mouth would show forth God's praise, today we live in such a negative environment so when we speak good and encouragement to people we meet we stand out for all the right reasons. Then David makes such a profound statement, through this situation David had learned that sacrifice and burnt offerings did not change his heart and because of this God did not take delight in burnt offerings. He declared in **verse 17** what pleases God and this has never changed, *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit (Being humble), a broken and contrite heart – these, O God, you will not despise"*. It is important to understand the word contrite means to be extremely sorrowful for sinning. David declared that God is looking for people who hate sin and sinful ways and to be prepared to humble ourselves before the Lord. We live in a world that promotes the importance of self and we must guard against any of that attitude being part of the way that we live. In this Psalm, we have seen the true nature of David, even though there was justification for his sinning, how he dealt with his bad actions has many lessons for us to learn and apply to the way that we live. He did not try to cover up his sin but acknowledged that he had sinned against God, this is so important for us to do, always come to the Lord and ask Him to forgive us. The final thing that is so

important is that he wanted to change completely his nature to a God-glorifying nature and when that happened others will see that change and want to be changed themselves

## Chapter 5 Psalm 92

This Psalm (song) was written to be sung on the Sabbath day to remind the people of God's goodness and the importance of setting apart time to rest from our many labours. The principle of setting a day aside to rest starts with God at the time of creation. However, the god of this world (Satan) has brainwashed the world – even a lot of people who call themselves Christians to consider every day the same so that the pressures of life make it difficult to consistently set apart a day of rest in the Lord. Just because it has become commonplace that does not mean that it is right and I believe it is time to change the way that we live and put the Lord in His rightful place. This Psalm has a special message to turn our attention from the things of this life to make the Lord number one in our life. **Verses 1&2** says: *“It is good to give thanks to the LORD and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; to declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night, To counteract the negative pressure of the world the way to do this is to learn to be thankful to the Lord, learn to see the Lord's goodness all the time because the Lord is with you all the time. To be thankful is a choice that we continually make, the more thankful you become the ungodly pressures seem to disappear. There is an old*

that I used to sing “Count your blessings name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done”. **Verses 4&5a** say: “*For you, Lord, have made me glad through your works; I will triumph in the works of your hands, O Lord, how great are your works!*” As I look back over my lifetime I am amazed at what the Lord has done in my life – a book could be written just about the major blessings of my life, not to say the minor things that are so easily forgotten. As I write this I am sitting in the unit overlooking the water at Paradise Pint which I have owned for over 12 years, naturally speaking, I did not the funds to purchase but God supernaturally proved the means and every day I am thankful to the Lord. I am certain most people can recall how God has provided for them over their lifetime. We must keep reminding ourselves of God’s goodness otherwise we will be impacted by the negative atmosphere of the world. To conclude this blog I want to look at **verse10b** which says: “*I have been appointed with fresh oil*”, oil in the bible speaks of the Holy Spirit, this Psalm teaches that when I am set apart time for the Lord I will experience the freshness of the Holy Spirit. This comes when I choose to use my heavenly language daily. In the next blog, I will look at how the last 4 verses have impacted my life.

## Psalm 92 Part 2

As we come to the second part of this Psalm these are the verses that have so impacted my life and my relationship with the Lord, especially over the last 7 years. The verses are **verses 12-15** which say: *“The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”* As I look back over my lifetime I have always been involved in all the churches that I have attended and have enjoyed being part of that church. However, my time at Highway Church has been different, from the first time we attended almost 11 years ago we felt that this was our spiritual home and although it is a 30 minute drive I have no intention of changing. The church family has been so good to me especially when my wife of 53 years without warning went to heaven almost 8 years ago. **Verse 12** says: *“The righteous shall flourish”*, this has been my situation, I humbly acknowledge that I am righteous through the blood of Jesus – I am no longer controlled by a sinful nature but live through the life of Jesus living in me. It is important to realize that this life

is ever increasing. The verse uses the expression – flourish like a palm tree and a cedar in Lebanon. The word flourish means to thrive or to break forth as a bud and this has been my ongoing experience. The next verse says: *“Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of the Lord”*. A tree has to be planted to bear fruit, that is where we thrive – in God’s presence. The next verse has so much meaning to me it says: *They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing.”* Since the loss of my wife with the Lord’s help and direction, I have written 5 books that are reflections of my ever new relationship with the Lord. At the age of 79, I was asked to preach at a Pastor’s conference in India. The lord has opened a door for me to write a weekly blog, and I have the opportunity to post a word of encouragement regularly on FaceBook. This is such an opportunity to share the freshness of my daily walk with Jesus. The final verse gives the reason for flourishing, being fresh and bearing fruit in one’s old age, it says: *“To declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in Him”*. It is time to declare the character of our God – He is upright – He is not like Satan who cannot be trusted. It is time for us to demonstrate by the way that we live that our God is good. And finally, He is a strong

foundation on which to build, and it is also, time to allow our light to shine in this dark world.