

PSALMS THAT HAVE IMPACTED

MY LIFE

Booklet 5

PSALM 23:1-6

550

The Lord Is My Shepherd

23

A PSALM OF DAVID.
The LORD is my^d shepherd; I shall not^e want.
He makes me lie down in green^f pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.¹

2

He restores my soul.
He^h leads me inⁱ paths of righteousness²
for his^j name's sake.

3

Even though I^k walk through the valley of^l the shadow of death,³
I will^m fear no evil,
forⁿ you are with me;
your^o rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

4

You^p prepare a table before me
in^q the presence of my enemies;
you^r anoint my head with oil;
my^s cup overflows.

5

Surely^t goodness and mercy⁵ shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall^u dwell⁶ in the house of the LORD
forever.⁷

6

IAN PIKE

Psalms that have impacted my life
© Copyright 2023 Ian Pike

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 Psalm 5.....	3
Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 2.....	5
Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 3.....	7
Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 4.....	9
Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 5.....	11
Chapter 2 Psalm16.....	13
Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 2.....	15
Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 3.....	17
Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 4.....	19
Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 5.....	21
Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 6.....	23
Chapter 3 Psalm 116.....	25
Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 2.....	27
Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 3.....	29
Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 4.....	31
Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 5.....	33
Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 6.....	35
Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 7.....	37
Chapter 4 Psalm 121.....	39
Chapter 4 Psalm 121 Part 2.....	41
Chapter 4 Psalm 121 Part 3.....	43

All scriptures quoted are New King James Version
unless otherwise noted

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 20s/30s 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 There are too many to write about. In my senior years, I 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 84, 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 as King we have 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 whom 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 fifth booklet, I have written about Psalm 16, Psalm 116, Psalm 121, and Psalm 5. 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 5

The title of this Psalm of David is “A prayer for guidance” Also, the commentaries say “It reflects how the righteous man prays for deliverance also from suffering, also to allow himself to serve God without distraction “. With this in mind, it will be so good to look at how David expresses his confidence in his God so that we will be challenged to have the same confidence in our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. **Verse 1** says: “*Give ear to my words O Lord, consider my meditation* “. The first request David made was for the Lord to listen to what he was saying. When I thought about this request I realised that I need to control what I am saying because at times I do not express my confidence in my God and because of this it becomes apparent to me that I need to draw closer to the Lord than I have been. I cannot rely on past experiences for my now experience with the Lord. This is a choice that I need to make daily and David’s declaration encourages me to be more diligent in my association with my Lord. David not only asks the Lord to listen to what he is saying but to what he is thinking about. Thinking is another name for meditating, The Bible encourages us in **Romans 12:2** “*to renew our mind* “ (What we are thinking about) and **Philippians 4:8** gives us a list of things to think (Meditate) on. What we think about regularly determines the direction of our lives. We can have good intentions but never change if we do not change what we are thinking. **Verse 2** says: “*Give heed to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for to you will I pray (or talk about my situation)* “. In this verse, David is very clear about to whom he is talking. Because he declared that he had a personal relationship with God, this is very clear because he used the word

'My'. I am challenged by this idea 'Is my relationship with the Lord so strong that I can call Him mine? The answer to that question is a resounding yes! This is where I feel so privileged because the last 9 years of living by myself I have been able to concentrate on the Lord in a way I have never experienced before. David was so definite about who he would talk to and that is what praying is. **Verse 3** says: *"My voice you shall hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning I will direct it to you, and I will look up "*. Here David explains one of the most important standards to live by, put God first. It is one that takes determination, but when it is achieved it brings such great comfort. I try to finish each day with a word of thanks for the day and commence with the same. When you start the day talking to the Lord you make a strong platform for the day. In this verse David uses a well-known expression of his 'I Will' This declaration shows us how serious David was about his relationship with his Lord. This is something that we all can copy to great effect and help us with the way we live with Jesus. David believed that God directed his path for good and was greater than any problem or attack that may come his way. May we have the same confidence in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 2

It is so important that we are reminded regularly of the fact that the plans God had for our lives are the best we can experience. Sometimes we forget this and fall back into trying to please ourselves. This is exactly what Satan wants us to do because if we stop pursuing the Lord this is exactly what happens. We start to believe our plans are best and we try to add the Christian experience to it which is completely misleading and false. The sad thing is that we can put on a 'Christian-like show' without our hearts being changed. The Psalmist David was not like that he had such a confidence in his God. **Verse 3** says: *" My voice you shall hear in the morning, O, Lord, in the morning I will direct it to you, and I will look up "*. The first thing that impacted me was the strength of his decision to put the Lord first in his life. As King, he would have so much responsibility for being in charge of the nation. People would be demanding of his time every day so he found a secret for him to have a close relationship with his God, he would start each day by talking to his Lord. As I look back over my life I have suffered because I thought I was too busy to spend time with the Lord and I believe this is a trap that we all experience at times. While it is true it is good to spend time with the Lord daily because when it becomes a priority something changes in the way that we live. It does not matter what stage of life we are at, it is still important to start the day with the Lord. I am challenged by the clarity of David's decision, he expressed it with the expression 'I Will and you Shall ', these expressions leave no misunderstanding as to what he was going to do. Because he had such confidence in his Lord he expressed that confidence in the challenges

that he faced. As a teenager, he killed a lion and a bear and was able to kill Goliath because of his unshakeable trust in his Lord. He knew his God was greater than any situation he faced. One final observation in the verse he declared that he would 'Look up'. This is another way of declaring that he lived his life which means he trusted his God. When you are uncertain you look down but the Lord is not found that way only when you look up. **Verse 4** says: "*For you are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with you*". What this declares is a warning to us in the world in which we live. Standards are continually falling and there is a danger that our silence is seen as an approval for the ungodly behaviour. **1 John 2:15** says: "*Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world the love of the Father is not in him*". There are so many ways to be entertained with ungodly standards today and it takes great strength of commitment not to accept and be overwhelmed by it. The Psalmist David is very clear that there is no place for evil to be in our lives. May we stand up and declare God's character to all the people we are in contact with daily.

Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 3

David continues to declare that the way of ungodly men has no place in the way that we live. We must be very clear that the standards of this world in which we live if we live by them then our relationship with the Lord suffers. I have noticed how the church has not stood up for that which is right. There is one good area, the number of 'Faith-based schools has increased as parents have decided those schools teach better values than secular state-run schools. There has been a lowering of Christian values which the church has done little to confront. Over the past, we have heard so little about how sin separates us from God. It is disappointing to hear that the divorce rate is the same for church attendees and non-church people. It is rare to hear Godly values being taught from the pulpit regularly. **Verse 5** says: *"The boastful shall not stand in your sight, you hate all workers of iniquity"*. In this verse, the Psalmist is not backward in declaring that God hates ungodly behaviour. Sin is sin and as such has no place in a Christian way of living. This is rarely discussed because most Christians see nothing wrong with being entertained by ungodly behaviour which is so easily available in our homes. Just because other people do not know what is happening God knows exactly the attitude of the heart. And because people attending church learn how to speak 'Christianese' they think living without God is acceptable. David is very clear in what he believes, not only does God hate sinful behaviour he declares in **Verse 6** *"You shall destroy those who speak falsehood, the Lord abhors (Regards with disgust) the bloodthirsty and the deceitful man"* The Lord is disgusted with ungodly behaviour

and sadly we have become desensitised to the ungodly way of the world. Unfortunately, our spirits are not rising and crying out to God to intervene in the world by building His church, but we pass it off as too hard to change. As I was thinking about this I am reminded that we can be passionate about many things but not God. When Barbara was alive I took it very seriously and let Her know that she was loved and never got tired of showing it, In fact, The more I did it the more I wanted to do it and the more pleasure I experienced. However, at times I have struggled to apply the same passion to my Lord. I do it for a while and then other things seem to creep in and take over. David says in **Verse 7** *“But as for me, I will come to your house in the multitude of your mercy, in fear In deepest awe of NLT) of you I will worship towards your Holy Temple “*. Here David is saying it does not matter how other people are living it will not stop him from being passionate about his Lord. I feel the same way, it is my number-one priority to go to Church and enjoy His presence with fellow believers. The **NLT** says *“In deepest awe, I will worship”*, This describes how I feel about my Saviour, I am so thankful because He sought me and I said “Yes” and have enjoyed His salvation these 69 years and look forward to many more loving God.

Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 4

It is good to keep reminding ourselves of the greatness of God in our lives. Because the world is getting darker all the time there is a danger that we can take our salvation for granted. When this happens we perform out of habit instead of enjoying the greatness of God who provided this great Salvation. David declared that he would have the Lord before his eyes continually and that God takes no pleasure in wickedness. His first response was always to turn to the Lord because it was the Lord and His ways that he trusted in. **Verse 8** says: *“Lead me O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies, make your way straight before my face ”*. David was under attack by his enemies who were seeking to destroy him. I am encouraged by the fact that even though he was being attacked his first response was not that he asked God to destroy his enemies but to ask the Lord to show him His ways. This is a very important to learn always have your eyes on the Lord and seek His ways and this allows everything to fade into the background. As I look back over my life there have been times when my focus was on the devil and I spent a lot of my time rebuking him, it was only when I remembered my focus on the devil I declared that he had power over me which he did not have. When I started to declare the greatness of my God the situation changed. David’s cry in this verse is for the Lord to lead him in God’s way and make His way clear to him. This can only happen when we stop struggling and rest in the Lord. It is good to keep reminding ourselves that we belong to Jesus and He will protect us. It is so important that we do not allow ourselves to be influenced by the voice of the ungodly, I have decided

to watch the daily news as little as possible. There was a time when the news was the news, now it is only man's opinion trying to change the moral standards by which we are to live. David understood the character and the behaviour of the ungodly for he said in **verses 9&10** *"For there is no faithfulness in their mouth, their inward part is destruction, their mouth is an open tomb, they flatter with their tongue. Pronounce them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels, cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, for they have rebelled against you "*. It does not matter what story is told, how they are trying to help people and trying to make the lives of the disadvantaged better, it does not change the fact that the god of this world is not good, and we join with the Psalmist and say "They have rebelled against you". This must be at the forefront of our thinking, a close and lasting relationship with the Lord is the only for us to live. While we must do good, doing good is not a substitute for our relationship with Him. God wants us to both live a life close to Him and help the poor and needy where we can. It is time for our lights to shine in this dark world.

Chapter 1 Psalm 5 Part 5

As we come to the final part of this Psalm it has been so encouraging to see David declare his trust and confidence in his God. He relied upon his God to be shown the right way to live because he also knew that his God took no pleasure in ungodly behaviour. This understanding is also refreshing because we live in a world that promotes ungodly attitudes and behaviour. It is so good to be reminded that God has set apart a place for those who reject His way. This means that when we choose to live God's way we find such pleasure and satisfaction. I write these blogs on Monday morning because I find my spirit so refreshed after worshipping the Lord with fellow believers yesterday at church. I find there is nothing greater than to join together with other believers and praise and worship the Lord. **Verse 11** says: *"But let all those rejoice who put their trust in you, let them even shout for joy, because you defend them, let those also love your name be joyful in you "*. There is nothing better than praising the Lord, especially when you use your mouth to do so. While it is good to think good things about the Lord, it is better when you speak praises to our God. One of the advantages I have living by myself I am not limited in the time I have to praise the Lord. The verse commences with the instruction for those who put their trust in God to praise Him, if you fall into that category then do the same. Rejoicing is such a contrast to sadness which is the result of believing the bad behaviour being reported all the time. This encouragement does not stop with rejoicing but goes to the next level of shouting for joy. You cannot shout unless you are enthusiastic about something. We see this behaviour at sporting events, loving God is so

much better than these pleasures so we must learn to shout for joy. The verse goes on to say that those who love the name of the Lord will be joyful. When we remember what the Lord has done for us it is so easy to be joyful. **Verse 12** says: *“For you, O Lord, will bless the righteous, with favour you will surround him as a shield”*. I like the way that David is so certain about his Lord, he knew from personal experience what his Lord was like for he declared that the ‘Lord will’. This is not a suggestion but a statement of fact. There is a great blessing when you live God’s way, this is what I have found as I look back over my lifetime I have forgotten the number of times the Lord has blessed me. I like the metaphor David used to describe the protection of the Lord. In David’s time in the battle, you were safe from the arrows and swords of the enemy when you used your shield. This is how David declares the favour of the Lord, it surrounds you and cannot be penetrated. This Psalm has encouraged me as I have read of David’s dependence on his Lord and his unshakable trust in Him.

Chapter 2 Psalm 16

As we come to this Psalm I find the title of this Psalm of David very interesting, the title is "The hope of the faithful, and the Messiah's victory". Here David is declaring the victory of Jesus hundreds of years before He was born, with his prophetic eyes he was declaring the greatness of the coming Jesus. Not only did he look forward he had great confidence in his now relationship with his God. As we look at this Psalm we are encouraged to do the same, not only have great confidence in our relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but look forward with such peace knowing the end with Jesus will be great. **Verse 1** says: "*Preserve me, O God, for in you I put my trust*". David unashamedly declares that God would protect him because he put his trust in Him. This is a good reminder to me and I ask myself the question "Do I trust God"? Because if I don't then I cannot expect Him to protect me. I see a danger in the business of life if I do not slow down and make sure that my trust is in God and not in my ability to live a life without Him. It is important to pause and take stock of our relationship with our Lord, that it is fresh and constant. Listen to what **Verse 2** says: "*O my soul, you have said to the Lord, 'You are my Lord, my goodness is nothing apart from you'*". I ask myself this question 'How often do I assess what I am saying about my Lord?' To do this it is so important because I have learned there have been times when I have coasted along living by my skill and think that I have been pleasing the Lord with the way that I am living. This verse gives a challenge that I must take regularly 'Where does my satisfaction come from, or from what I am doing or my relationship with my Lord'. I am challenged by this

because at times I have deluded myself into believing that I am close to the Lord by comparing myself with other people, and then I allow myself to become proud of what I know about God. All these actions have been within me, not the Public image I portray. This is why a close consistent relationship is essential because sin and God do not mix, the moment I start to live the wrong way my conscience warns me and if I obey my conscience it remains soft and guides my life. However, if I justify my actions then my conscience becomes hard and cannot warn me of the dangers of the choices that I have made. This is why it is so important to stay soft before God. I am so glad that naturally, I have very little talent to rely on to impress other people. I have realised that in all facets of my life, it was the ability that God gave me that made me successful. I can join with David and say “My goodness is nothing apart from the Lord”. Today we have a great opportunity to display to the world the greatness of our God!

Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 2

As we continue to declare with David “The hope of the faithful, and the Messiah’s victory”, this declaration dispels any threats of the enemy that we sometimes imagine. The Bible warns us in **1 Peter 5:8&9** “*Be sober, be vigilant, because our adversary the Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith*”. We live in a world where we hear the roar of evil all the time and if we begin to doubt the greatness of our God we can begin to fear which robs us of our confidence in God. We must keep reminding ourselves that Satan’s power has been broken and as a child of God we are protected by the goodness and greatness of our God. Listen to **Verse 3** how the Lord describes us “ *And to the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight*”. We have just come through the last two years where the Church was continually under attack and sadly many people took their eyes off the greatness of our God and the truth that God is in control and allowed their light to grow dim. However, this year we have seen God at work in His Church. In the Church where I belong, we are seeing people being born again every time we meet and recently 42 people were baptised in water a few Sunday nights ago. We see evidence of the Lord declaring that His children are the excellent ones in whom is His delight. It is so encouraging to know what God thinks of us when we choose to wholly follow Him. This is a good reason to continually check the way that we are living and see if the things of this world are beginning to attract us. Because if they are then we need to repent and readjust our focus to be only on the Lord and His ways. In **Verse 4** David declares what happens

when we stray from the Lord. *“Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god; their drink offerings of blood I will not offer nor take up their names on my lips”*. This verse very clearly states that when you turn away from following God, the Godly presence and joy disappear this is something that we need to be aware of because if we have a close daily relationship with the Lord, we know very quickly that we are going away from our God. This is where we need to be strong and admit that we are heading in the wrong direction. Sadly I have found out that if I do not repent it becomes easier to sin and move away from God. The second thing David highlights is that people who are away from God can act as though they love God. David said that he would not participate in their deception. This is where we can stand in the gap and pray for people who are drifting away from the Lord. It is so important that we keep our spiritual eyes open and pray that someone will have the opportunity to speak into their situation and encourage them to turn around. This is a very important part to play and everyone can do it when we are putting God first in our lives.

Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 3

This Psalm of David is so encouraging to me because as I reflect on what the Lord is doing it builds up my confidence in Him. **Verse 5** says: *“You, O Lord, are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; you maintain my lot”*. **NLT** *“Lord, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing, you guard all that is mine”*, It is so good to pause and reflect and come to the understanding that my whole life comes from the Lord. There is only one source of satisfaction and that is putting the Lord first in our life. This is where being disciplined is so important, because there is so much all around us that if we allow them to be our focus then the Lord is no longer first in our lives. This leads to being distant from the Lord and we start to worry about the state of the world. This is exactly what the god of this world wants and tries so hard to distract us. This is why we must keep reminding ourselves of the greatness of our God in our lives, the Psalmist says: *“You alone are my inheritance”*, it is so important to remind ourselves daily that our future is in the Lord and because of this we look forward to our journey of ‘Living with Jesus’. David also says the Lord is *“my cup of blessing”*. As I pause and take note of the little things that happen continually for my good. I become overwhelmed by the goodness of my God in my life and it is so important that I declare this goodness to other people. I am so thankful that the Lord has opened up this opportunity to write this weekly blog. The final thing that the Psalmist declares in this verse is ‘The Lord will guard me all the time’. David repeats the same truth in **Psalm 23:1** *“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”*. **Verse 6** says: *“The lines fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good inheritance”*. **NLT** *“The*

land you have given me is a pleasant land, what a wonderful inheritance". I feel so blessed as I look back over my life and compare it with the salary that I have earned and look at where I am living now, in the natural it was impossible but I live with the blessing of God. Also, for the last nine years I have lived off a single-aged pension and I am amazed at the provision of God, I am certainly living in a pleasant place and continue to be amazed at the goodness of God in my life. It is so good to describe my Lord and Saviour as a "Wonderful inheritance", because of how He supplies all my needs. It is so important that we pause and take the time to reflect and declare the goodness of our God in our lives. This is a decision that we make and at times it is not an easy decision to make, but when we do it is so very rewarding. This is a good habit to develop, may we learn to pause and take the time to remember the goodness of God in our lives and spend more time thanking Him for His provision.

Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 4

As we continue with this Psalm of David it is good to be reminded of the purpose of this Psalm. David wrote it for the express purpose of giving hope to the faithful. It is interesting that thousands of years later the faithful still need to be reminded of the hope that we have in Jesus. In recent years we have experienced the onslaught of Satan, churches were closed for a significant time, and the general population was exposed to fear-mongering by the media. And if we are not careful we can take our eyes off the Lord then our hope disappears. Listen to how David encourages in **Verse 7** *“I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, my heart also instructs me in the night seasons”*. Interestingly, it all starts with a choice, this is something we are doing all the time, and what we allow our thoughts to concentrate on determines how we live. This part of our life God has no control over, we were created with the ability to freely choose to live however we like. This is something that we must be very clear about, it is our choices, not our circumstances that determine our future, while circumstances can influence us, finally, it is our choice that determines our destination. It is a very hopeful experience when we acknowledge the hand of God in our lives because at times it is so easy to be caught up in the routine of life and forget that God’s hand is on our lives. This is where getting aside regularly to read God’s word and spend time with Him is so important. I am encouraged by the times that His word speaks to me to show me how I should live and I put into practice what He has spoken to me. We also receive instruction through the preaching of His word, this is why we cannot at-

tend church too much. Remember that these are decisions that we make and it is our choice to make them. Next, the Psalmist says: "My heart also instructs me in the night seasons". The night seasons are the times when I learn to switch off the pressures of the day and relax and think of the goodness of God, unfortunately, some people never learn to take the time to relax and this can cause all sorts of problems. This is where there is no substitute for learning to praise the Lord for the little things of life and calm down and enjoy His presence. Our heart is the control centre of our life **Luke 6:45** says: "*A good man out of the treasure of his heart brings forth good, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks*". This verse reminds us that we cannot fool God, because our language and the contents of our speech express what is inside of us. That is why at the end of the day learn to rest in God and finish the day with thankful thoughts. It is so good that daily we are allowed to express our hope in the Lord because He will never leave or forsake us and is always encouraging us to be closer to Him.

Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 5

I am so encouraged by the inspiration of God's word and this Psalm is no exception as the Title says "The hope of the faithful and the Messiah's (Jesus) victory". This Psalm certainly produces hope for those who trust in the Lord. Look at what **Verse 8&9** says: " *I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh shall rest in hope*". **NLT** "I know the Lord is always with me, I will not be shaken, for He is right beside me. No wonder my heart is filled with joy, and my mouth shouts His praises! My body rests in safety ". These verses commence with the secret of loving Jesus and living with Him. The statement is "I have set", the success of our Christian walk commences with a strong choice that we do not change, I make no apology that I am passionate about living with Jesus, these last nine years since the loss of Barbara have been highlighted by how wonderful it is living with Jesus. Being set in our ways brings great comfort when we are set on Jesus. Because of this decision, I know He is always with me, it is so good to pause and sense His presence. It is not a matter of trying to please Him, it is how we live. When we choose to live with Jesus with no regrets then there is a steadfastness we experience. This is something to treasure because it makes living so precious. Because we live in a world that is changing and the rate of change is increasing, this is why it is so important to continually make the right choices and be steadfast in the way that we live. The next thing that happens is our heart is glad, when our spirit comes alive it is so easy to praise and worship the Lord and we use the time that is available to us to do so. **Verse 8** says when our spirit

is alive our body experiences a calmness that is so refreshing. As I ponder these verses I realise what a wonderful provision my Salvation provides, being a new creation in Jesus Christ is so precious with so many benefits. **Psalm 103:1&2** says: “ *Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all His benefits*”. I am inspired by this Psalm of David when our attitude is correct living with Jesus has so many benefits. These benefits have become more visible in my life as I continually choose to put Jesus first. Living by oneself at the age of 84 years has a great temptation to slack off and just coast along. I have found the exact opposite to be true, at every opportunity I have I tell people of the greatness of my God. These are great days to be alive because God is beginning to do a new thing in the church and I am glad to be alive so that I can be part of what God is doing!

Chapter 2 Psalm 16 Part 6

As we come to the final part of this Psalm we find something rarely mentioned in the Old Testament. **Verse 10** talks about what David was expecting and then he prophesied about the coming Messiah (Jesus Christ the Lord). The verse says: *“For you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption”*. **NLT** *“Rot in the grave”*. Most commentaries refer to Sheol as a Hebrew belief that it is the resting place of the departed spirits of all people, but also a place where God remembers His people. Old Testament was so different to what happens to us because of Jesus dying on the cross and rising again on the third day, that is when Jesus defeated death and released those who had been captive in Sheol. Today we have a choice of heaven or hell, David had great confidence in his God that he would not be forgotten when he died, he knew he would be rewarded for being *“A man after God’s own heart”*. The second part of this verse is so profound David is saying through the Holy Spirit that Jesus would not stay in the grave and this is exactly what happened. This is one of the many prophesies about Jesus that was declared hundreds of years before Jesus was born, this gives us great confidence to trust and live by God’s word. **Verse 11** says: *“You will show me the path of life, in your presence is fullness of joy, at your right hand there are pleasures forevermore”*. I am so encouraged by the confidence that David expressed in his God, this is one area of our lives where being confident in our Saviour determines our outlook on life. I am amazed as I look back over my life at the many times now I see the hand of God guiding my life. There have been too many to elaborate further, I am so blessed to be

living where I live as I write this blog. It is so good as we continually commit our lives to Him He shows us the right path to take. This verse goes on to say *“In your presence is fullness of Joy”* This is why I am so content and happy, I am experiencing His presence in an ever-increasing measure and it is so wonderful to experience. These last 9 years living without the love of my life, except for missing Barbara, have been the greatest years of my life. My son created the web page to display my writings and Blogs have told me that each month over 200 people look at my web page from all over the world, I am so blessed. The verse goes on to say *“At your right hand there are pleasures for evermore”*. It is so to be reminded of the goodness of God every day, as we have looked at this Psalm we have certainly been encouraged to experience *“ The hope of the faithful, and the Messiah’s victory”*. Living with Jesus is certainly a blessed life.

Chapter 3 Psalm 116

The title of this Psalm is a “Song of thanksgiving for deliverance from death”. The writer of this Psalm is unknown but most commentators believe it was David who wrote this Psalm. If he did the bible does not record exactly an event that indicates a situation that was difficult to experience. The psalmist recounts how he was in great distress and cried out for help. God heard the cry of his heart and delivered him from death. The Psalmist in **Psalm 119:92** says: *“Unless your law had been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction”*. This Psalm is divided into three parts, in the first part the Psalmist recounts his distress and his cry to God for help, the second part describes God’s deliverance of the psalmist from death, and in the third part, the psalmist expresses his gratitude to God and his vow to praise God forever. I am so encouraged by how the bible does not try to hide bad events that people suffer. I am certain that most people who read this blog have experienced times of great distress or know of people who have experienced bad situations. Also, it must be pointed out that the psalmist wrote this song after experiencing God’s victory because when you are going through severe adverse situations at times it is difficult to rejoice in the Lord. However, when the situation is over you can see the hand of God in your life, this is truly what I have experienced over my lifetime, I have certainly experienced the goodness of God. **Verse 1&2** says: *“I love the Lord because He has heard my voice and my supplications (Earnest request) Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore, I will call upon Him as long as I live”*. I am so encouraged by this declaration of the Psalmist, he declared that he loved the Lord. We know that love is not a feeling but

is expressed by what we do. This is where ungodly standards and God's way are poles apart and have very little in common. The god of this world loudly tries to portray love as a feeling or an emotional expression which is wrong. However, when you express your love by what you do your emotions are always impacted. This is what I experienced during the last 10 years of my marriage to Barbara, (Go to ianpike.com.au and download the free booklet "Reflections of a Married Man" for further details). The Psalmist had a good reason for loving his God when he earnestly cried out to God for help, God answered his cry, the bible does not say exactly what he said because what you are saying is not as important as coming to Him for the answer. Be very careful that the person you are talking to is God because He is the only one who can help you. The Psalmist also makes a profound statement, "Because He listens to me". This is a great revelation to come to - God wants me to talk to Him all the time. This is the conclusion the Psalmist came to for he said "Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I Live". This is why you cannot be halfhearted with your relationship with the Lord, you must continually be 'All in' This is the only way I know how to successfully live with Jesus. I believe it is all or nothing and have proved this over my life.

Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 2

As we continue with the Psalmist's distress and cry to God for help we read in **Verse 3** "*The pains of death encompass me, and the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow*". In Old Testament times Sheol was the abode of the dead, however, this is not true today because Jesus conquered death and the grave when He rose again on the third day after dying on the cross. Jesus said to the dying thief on the cross "Today you shall be with me in Paradise" (**Luke 23:43**). It is so interesting to hear the honesty of the Psalmist, while we do not know exactly why and how he was suffering, in his talk with his God he was very open to his situation and did not hold back when talking to his God. There have been times when I was not completely truthful when I was talking to God about what I was going through. I thought that if I did not tell God how I felt I could survive by hiding it from God, The silly thing about this type of deception I am only deceiving myself. The situation the Psalmist was experiencing was very severe, he could almost sense what it was like to be dead. He could not a way around his problem for he said "I found trouble and sorrow". It is important to note that he did not stay overwhelmed by his thoughts because he said in **Verse 4** "*Then I called upon the name of the lord; 'O Lord, I implore you, deliver my soul!'*" *NLT* "*Please Lord save me!*" It is so good to forcefully declare that the Lord is the only answer to what you are going through. **James 5:16b** says: "*The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*". It does not matter how severe the situation we are experiencing, the only answer is coming and confessing our situation to the Lord because when we know that He has the answer to our

problem. However, there is a danger that we can try and fix the situation in our strength while that may happen it affects our relationship with the Lord, and then I become distant from Him. It takes time to repent of trusting in our strength and change and rebuild our close relationship with the Lord again. The psalmist was very aggressive in his calling out to his God. *“O Lord, I implore you, deliver my soul”* He was very clear he believed that his Lord would save him. **Verse 5** says: *“Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yes our God is merciful”*. It is so comforting when we acknowledge the true nature of our God because His nature never changes and this is why we can put our confidence in Him. One thing we know is that despite the severe trial he was experiencing he came out victorious. This is where we start when our trust is in the Lord because the Lord is gracious and righteous we have nothing to fear. Because our Saviour is so trustworthy we have nothing to fear because He has conquered everything so we can live a victorious life.

Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 3

It is so encouraging to see the honesty of the Psalmist, he does not try to cover how he felt. But boldly comes to his God for help. As I have looked back over my life there have been times when I have tried to fix the situation by myself thinking that I could hide it from God. When I think about that attitude it demonstrates that I was deceived when I think that way. It is strange how when we experience tough times that we can think that God is not the answer. The Psalmist had no problem being honest with his God for he knew that God was his only help, may we come to the same conclusion. **Verse 6&7** says *“The Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you”*. The Psalmist declares that he was brought low, for him to acknowledge that his situation must have been very bad. But he did not dwell on his low situation but rejoiced on his God’s answer. Whatever the situation we face, God is always the answer to our problems. This is an area where Satan tries to trick us into believing that God is not interested in the situation we find ourselves in. The exact opposite is true our Saviour cares about all the situations we face in life. The Psalmist then gave himself a good talking to, he said *“Return to your rest O my soul”*, it is so important to recognise what is going on, if we are feeling unhappy tell yourself of the goodness of God in your life. **Romans 12:2** instructs us to *“Renew our mind”* This is a choice that we have to make continually, it is not a single decision we make but something that we do regularly. Our Christian life is not a static experience where some time ago we made a decision and that is all that has happened. I am so blessed these last 9

years as I have lived by myself and have been able to seek the Lord every day. I am so thankful for how precious the Lord has become to me. The Psalmist reminded himself that the Lord had dealt bountifully with him. Even though he had experienced situations that he did not enjoy and did not want to experience again he found the time to acknowledge the greatness of his God. In **Verse 8** the psalmist declares: *“For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling”*. Again the Psalmist tells of the severity of his situation – he does not cover it up. The situation was so bad that he almost died but he did not wallow in what had happened, he concentrated on the greatness of his God. Something that I have learned is that you cannot praise the Lord too much. The situation that he had experienced brought him to tears, this gives a good indication of how he suffered, but he did not stay there, he allowed the Lord to help him. The final thing the Psalmist is that he was thankful because *“His feet were kept from falling”*, When you keep falling you cannot make progress, you just stay in the same place. God wants us to grow in Him and it is so encouraging in this new season to see Him working in the lives of His people.

Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 4

After the Psalmist recounts his distress and his cry to God for help, we come to the second part of this psalm where he describes how God delivered him from his distressful situation. This is a good lesson for us to learn, not to be ashamed to admit to God that we are being severely tested. It is so important that we talk to God who can help us and not to other people. Because when we talk to other people generally it only makes the situation worse. **Verse 9** says: *“I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living”*. This verse is so profound because the Psalmist declares what he was experiencing in the land of the living. His relationship with his God applied to how he lived every day, not some fanciful idea of how God blesses which has no relevance to our everyday living. He commences this verse with the statement ‘I will’ This declares his attitude to the way that he lived, he took ownership of his destination, He did not hope that things would get better, and he knew where his victory came from and had decided that he would not deviate from that decision despite whatever circumstance he found himself in. After this choice, he clearly defined how he would live, for he said that “He would walk before the Lord”, his relationship with his Lord was real and he applied it to how he lived every day. May we be encouraged to make the same choice? **Verse 10** says: *“I believed, therefore I spoke, ‘I am greatly afflicted’”*. Because of his great belief in his God, he had no difficulty in explaining the problem that he was facing. He was not put off by the enormity of his situation. This is how we can go through great trials because our confidence is in our God and not mankind. It is important that we understand that God “sends the rain on the

just and the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). Because we live in a wicked world sometimes we suffer because of this and this is why it is essential we have a close relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is so rewarding to have our confidence in God and the only way that we experience it is when we go through hard times and come out the other side victorious. **Verse 11** is very interesting because the Psalmist admits that he was wrong “*For I said, in my haste ‘all men are liars’*”. In the pressure of life, it is possible to come to a wrong conclusion, just because a person lets you down it is very dangerous to apply this to all people that you know. There is a danger that when you get hurt you withdraw into yourself, this is a formula for disaster. If you come to a wrong conclusion, repent and if you have hurt someone go to that person and ask for forgiveness. How they respond is between themselves and God, But you have a clean heart so that your relationship with the Lord can continue to flourish. It is so good to keep our relationship with God pure because then He can shine through us and impact the lives of other people for His glory.

Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 5

Now we come to the third part of this Psalm where the psalmist expresses his gratitude to God and his vow to praise God forever. It is so important to remember that in this psalm the psalmist made it very clear that although he had experienced a very severe circumstance his only answer was his God. Then he described how God had delivered him from his severe circumstances and that he would not forget how God had helped him as long as he lived. **Verse 12** says: *“What shall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?”* While it is true that God does not expect us to ‘Pay Him’ for what He has done in our lives, it is important out of our love and thankfulness we choose to live a life that is pleasing to Him. I am reminded of my 53 years of marriage to Barbara as I reflect on those years I am in awe of the way Barbara went out of her way to do things for our marriage without any thought of being rewarded for what she had done. It just made me love her more and more as the years passed by. Because the Psalmist appreciated what the Lord and Saviour had done for him he wanted to do something from the bottom of his heart which said to the Lord “I am so thankful”. While the Lord knows our thoughts that we have it is important for our sake to do something that reinforces our love for our Lord. It is also important that every day acknowledge that we are being kept by the hand of God whether we are aware of it or not. **Verse 13** says: *“I will take up the cup of Salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord ”*. This verse highlights an area of our lives in which we can become complacent. We must never forget what it cost Jesus so that our sins can be forgiven. I will never forget the night that I was born

again even though it is almost 70 years ago, that life-changing experience of saying yes to His Salvation has given me a lifetime of living with Jesus. These years have been so good and satisfying and while there have been a few times when I allowed myself to be sidetracked I am thankful that they have been few and only for a short period. This is why I feel so blessed to be able to write these blogs at this stage of my life. The Psalmist said that he would call upon the name of the Lord. **Proverbs 18:10** says: *“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe”*. We must never forget the power of the name of Jesus and live a life where He is foremost in our thinking. It is a good habit to develop remembering the greatness of our Salvation and the power there is in the name of Jesus. **Philippians 2: 10&11** says: *“That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of those in heaven, and those on the earth, and those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”*. The Psalmist knew a secret he would not forget – the greatness of his Saviour and would declare it at every opportunity that he had to do so. May we join with the Psalmist and continually declare the greatness of our Saviour.

Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 6

As we continue with the Psalmist's decision to continually express his gratitude to his God, despite suffering the most difficult circumstances he did not stay there, he chose to bless the Lord. This a great challenge we face all the time, there is so much going on around us that we can forget how God is to be praised. Praising the Lord brings such strength to our daily walk with the Lord. As we look at this Psalm there is a phrase that the Psalmist keeps repeating and that phrase is "I WILL". 'I Will ' is so powerful for it explains exactly how we approach life. There is no misunderstanding in 'I Will', for we declare exactly where we stand and will not drift away from the Lord. We will never fall into the temptation to allow other things to become more important in our lives than our relationship with our Lord. **Verse 14** says: *"I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of His people "*. This scripture takes a little bit to understand because today's society pays very little attention to 'Vows'. Unfortunately, we cannot trust what is reported to us, especially by the news, unfortunately, we cannot trust the world views which is trying to create the illusion that what they are saying is true. In bible times the exact opposite is true, when a person made a vow it was done in front of two witnesses and could be broken without suffering the consequences of a broken vow. The psalmist is very clear that no situation would or could change his commitment to his Lord. This a very fulfilling way to live, there is such joy in our relationship with the Lord when we do not allow anything to come between us and our Saviour. It is also interesting to note where the Psalmist found his Lord, it was in the presence of His people. He was

not some distant God but one who was always near. This is why I name my Christian experience 'Living With Jesus' When you take the Lord with you all the time no what you plan to do He is always with you. **Verse 15** says: "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints*". Firstly the death of Godly parents, secondly, the death of our youngest daughter at the age of 40 years and the sudden death of my precious wife of 53 years. Knowing that the passing of the people that we love is precious in the eyes of my Lord softens the sense of loss that we feel, just knowing the value the Lord places on the homecoming of His loved ones certainly gives us strength found no other way. **Verse 16** says: "*O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant; you have loosed my bonds*". The Psalmist had learned to more he was tied to his Lord, the freer he felt. This is one of life's hardest lessons to learn. The more you are committed to the Lord, there is freedom you experience in your spirit that continually refreshes you. This is exactly opposite to how the natural man (Without the Lord) thinks and is the reason why **Romans 12:1** says: "*And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*". May we continually choose to live God's way?

Chapter 3 Psalm 116 Part 7

As we come to the last part of this Psalm the Psalmist continues to express how grateful he is to his God. This is an area of our lives that we have to be careful about. When the struggles are over and life returns to normal there is a danger that we can be tempted to coast along. This is why it is so important to have a set routine of spending time daily with the Lord. This does not come easily but we need to be disciplined and continually assess how we are relating to the Lord. **Verse 17** says: *“I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord “*. In this verse, we see the determination of the Psalmist for he declares ‘I will ’ This is such a powerful declaration because it shows that the Psalmist has made up his mind and will not allow other things to become more important to him. This is an area of our lives where we cannot be halfhearted about our relationship with the Lord. As I look back over my life that is something that was never up to negotiation. God came first in my life and I am so glad that I made that decision it has helped me readjust my life after my wife of 53 years went to heaven 9 years ago. It is so encouraging to see what the Psalmist decided to do, he decided to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord. Being thankful should never be limited to how we feel because it is important to choose to praise the Lord whether we feel like it or not. This is where being disciplined has great rewards. There have been many times when I did not feel like praising the Lord where being disciplined pays such dividends and you start praising Him and after a very short period your attitude changes and you get lost in the wonder of praising Him. Not only does the Psalmist thank the Lord

he calls upon the name of the Lord, and we must never forget the power there is in the name of the Lord. **Proverbs 18:10** says: *“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the Righteous run into it and are safe”*. Even though the Psalmist had experienced the worst situation of his life, he used that trial to reinforce his trust in his God. May we be like the Psalmist and use everything we face as an opportunity to declare God’s greatness in our lives to the people around us. The last **two Verses** say: *“I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of His people, in the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of you O Jerusalem”*. The Psalmist was unashamed to declare his commitment to love the Lord everywhere he goes, - amongst his friends, when visiting the temple and to the people where he lived. I have been so encouraged by this Psalm, that it points out that even when there are times of great distress and trials when that happened the Lord is the answer. When we experience the deliverance of the Lord may we tell everyone about the greatness of our God that you have experienced. May we be like the Psalmist and declare the goodness of God to other people.

Chapter 4 Psalm 121

I am encouraged by the attitude of the Psalmist who wrote this Psalm. Attitude is something that we do not speak about often enough, but it is something that determines how we see life. The Bible is very clear that we are motivated by what we see. A good attitude is not something that just happens but it is the outworking of our relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is impossible to be dominated by negative thoughts when we are worshipping the Lord. Worship takes you to a new level of appreciation for the greatness of God. Being a worshipper is a choice that we need to make regularly. If we are not deliberate about this we begin to coast along and this is what the god of this world wants us to do, back off and become distracted by the normal pressures of life and the state of the ungodly world. The title of this Psalm is "God the help of those who seek Him". The Psalmist challenges us with this title because it is very dangerous to believe that God will protect us if we do not put Him first and live a life that pleases us and not God. I am so glad that I have learned to put God first so I can look back over my life and be thankful especially these last 9 years living without the love of my life. The fact is we can find God in every season of Life when we make Him number one. **Verse 1&2** says: *"I will lift up my eyes to the hills – from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord who made the heaven and the earth "*. The Psalmist is very clear about his attitude to his God, he commences with this life-changing statement 'I will ', the significance of this statement cannot be overstated, this declaration and belief should be the first thing we confess each day. We cannot start each day being apathetic to our situation and

just hope everything will work out – if we do it is a formula for disaster a life without God. And that is something that I do not want to even desire to experience. It is so good to have that attitude and not to be influenced by other people, I have decided to be a man of God as long as I live. The Psalmist declared that he would narrow his focus to see God's creation. Today we are bombarded with disasters from all over the world and continually told things are getting worse. If we allow this to be our focus then our relationship with the Lord suffers and becomes unimportant to us. We need to continually remind ourselves that it takes greater faith to believe what we see coming out of nothing than to believe in God's creation. It is a good habit to have that we believe God created everything. In **Verse 2** the Psalmist categorically states that his help comes from the Lord! This is a great place to be in, our trust is in the Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ. This comes about when we spend quality time reading and meditating on His word and talking with Him every day. Having my confidence in my God is so rewarding every day and gets sweeter with Him, Life is so much better when we have a song in our hearts to the Lord continually. In this season of our lives may our declaration be 'I Wil' and enjoy the greatness that He has for us who trust in Him.

Chapter 4 Psalm 121 Part 2

It is good to take the time to remember God is a helper to those who diligently seek Him. The danger we have and must continually guard against is not to be caught up with the pressures of everyday living. These pressures can come upon us without doing anything to cause them. The god of this world (Satan) is a master of this, sadly I have seen good people who were once regular in their Church attendance and willing to volunteer where help was required slowly become irregular in their attendance and finally not attending church at all. The biggest cause of this is when the children take up some sport and they do not have time to attend church. Sport should never take the place of God in our lives. The Psalmist is very clear in **Verse 3** which says: *“He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber”*. To describe how God looks after us the word “Will” is used – this means that it is certain that it will happen because this is the nature of God and He never changes. As previously mentioned the danger we face is not the character of God and He never changes but the weakness of our human nature. This is why it is essential to have a daily time with the Lord, this keeps our relationship with Him strong. It is so interesting that the Psalmist declares a difference between us and our God. Every day we spend at least 1/3 of our day sleeping but God never sleeps, this means His attention is on us all the time whether we are aware of it or not – He is looking after us 24 hrs in every day. Understanding this is so important because the Psalmist repeats this in **Verse 4** *“Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep”*. This is very interesting because when I went to

school we were taught to remember by daily repeating especially our numbers table. Even after all these years, I can still repeat those tables. The Psalmist keeps reminding us how God never forgets us and this is something that we should repeat daily. I am so glad that the Lord looks after me all day and every day, may we develop the habit of thinking about the Lord's goodness and thanking Him for the way He provides and protects us. **Verse 5** says: *"The Lord is your keeper, The Lord is your shade at your right hand"*. Again the Psalmist is very descriptive in describing God's protection over us. He declares "The Lord is", this means no matter what we are confronted with the answer is with us. We do not have to wait for the Lord to come to our aid He is already with us. As we understand this truth we experience a calmness that living with Jesus can only supply. The right hand speaks of strength and the ability to be victorious. Because the Lord is our shield this means we will not be affected by what the battle throws at us. His shade gives us protection and allows us not to be wearied. It is so good to reflect on the various ways that the Lord looks after us and as we do we understand that we are important to Him. I am so glad that I belong to Jesus and He is my protector in every situation of life that I experience from time to time.

Chapter 4 Psalm 121 Part 3

As we come to the final part of this Psalm I have been so encouraged by the clear way the Psalmist expresses his trust in his Lord. He consistently uses the phrases “ I Will”, “The Lord is” and “The Lord Shall” to declare God’s help to those who seek Him. There is a danger that if we are not careful we can allow the pressures of life to dull our relationship with the Lord and we start to confess “I hope so” because we have distanced ourselves from Him and we become not sure anymore. The Psalmist was not like that, he had full confidence in his God. **Verse 6** says: “*The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night*”. The Psalmist declares that God’s protection is for 24 hours every day, there is no time when we are not covered by God whether we are aware of it or not. It is so good to relax and just accept the fact that He is protecting us all the time so we can call Him the Lord God Almighty our protector. **Verse 7** continues in the same vein: “*The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul*”. Now is a good time to stop and reflect on the goodness of God in our lives. Not only does He supply our every need but also protects us, sadly The protection of the Lord is at times easy to forget. Because nothing outstanding happens to us we do not know how many times the Lord has intervened to protect us, so we do not take the time to thank the Lord. I am certain that God has protected me and my family over the years and most of the time I have God’s protection for granted. **Verse 8** says: “*The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and for evermore* “. The Psalmist commenced this Psalm with the statement “*My help comes from the Lord*” and concludes by reinforcing the same truth that as long as he

lives his God will protect him. I find that it is so easy at times just to coast along and take our Godly benefits for granted. And if we are not careful we can start to believe that it is our ability that looks after us. This is something that does not come suddenly but slowly so we do not notice it happening. This is why it is so important to spend regular time with the Lord, being blessed on Sunday is not sufficient to keep us close to the Lord. The Bible reminds us that God's mercies are new every morning and we need to spend time to experience these new mercies. There is nothing better than to have a fresh relationship with the Lord because we were created to have fellowship with God. As we look back over this Psalm it has been so good to be reminded of how precious we are in the eyes of the Lord and He protects us all the time. May we never lose sight of this fact and live a life full of praise to our Lord.