

Psalm 92. The title heading gives a key to what the unnamed psalmist had in view, the celebration of the Sabbath. The term sabbath means “rest” and is familiar to most nowadays, both Jew and Gentile. Its origin harkens back to the seventh, and last, day of the Creation. God rested having completed His work of creation and seeing that it was very good.

*Genesis 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God **blessed** the seventh day, and **sanctified it**: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. 4 these are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,*

God sanctified (set apart) the seventh day from the very beginning. It was to be especially different from the other days and thereby defined the seven day week still observed on calendars in most of the world. Twenty five centuries later the Sabbath was included in the Ten Commandments God gave His people Israel chosen out from among the many nations on earth. After that it is mentioned in the Old Testament several times down through the centuries, often in reminders by God’s prophets of Israel’s neglect and desecration of this Day set apart by God. Their 70 years captivity in Babylon resulted from not keeping their Sabbaths, 2Chronicles 36:21.

It was a Day for refraining from work, commemorating God’s rest from His work. It thereby provided for quiet rest, relaxation, and reflection upon God. While both men and their animals could rest and be refreshed on each seventh day, mankind had been made in God’s image and likeness so could reflect upon their God and His ways as Creator, Protector and Blessor. Such thoughtful reflection upon God leads to gratitude, praise and spiritual renewing of devotion and rededication of lives to God with purpose and energy for the six weekdays to follow.

God finished His six days work then but soon resumed a new kind of work. The work of the rescue, redemption, and new creation of lost sinners, a lost race and a sin cursed earth. The Lord Jesus acknowledged that work as He continued with His mission (1Corinthians 15:20-28) to earth. In those days the Pharisees had successfully re-instituted a rigorous, but heartless, observance of the Law of Moses and the Sabbath. They did not enter into the grace of the Lord of the Sabbath being demonstrated by the work of the Lord Jesus in their midst.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

At the end of His life’s work here Jesus instituted another observance, “this do in remembrance of Me.” This was

observed on the FIRST day of the week, memorializing the resurrection and a new beginning. The resurrection signified Christ’s work was both successfully completed and accepted by God. “It is Finished” indeed! This remembrance of the Lord is **not** the Sabbath nor is it a continuation of it. It replaces the Sabbath with something far deeper. While every human being was to remember his Creator, Ecclesiastes 12:1, now believers remember Christ. (But Christ Himself is the Creator come in the flesh.) We who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb remember Him the Redeemer but we do not forget Him the Creator. While we primarily remember Him in His death, we remember also His perfect life and service and witness for God. And our remembrance and worship spills over into His work as original Creator and looks forward to the time when He returns to bring His renewal and rest to His whole Creation. And that is what these two Psalms look forward to as well.

Many if not most persons “of the Christian Faith” today regard Sunday on our calendars as the “Sabbath.” In past centuries labor and doing business was illegal under the laws of the land in accordance with the religious teaching of those days. Today, sadly, neither a day of rest nor a day for worship is observed at either end of the week. The weekend has gradually become two days, two more days, of unrelenting rigorous work for too many. And for others two precious days of self indulgence, often without even a nod toward God the Creator or God the Saviour. We born again believers, saved by grace, need to watch lest we be drawn into the maw of pleasure seeking, shopping or working on the Lord’s Day. We can use the Day provided in our calendar as the Lord’s Day and reflect on Him together and alone, and to serve Him in the work of the gospel, discipling believers, relieving the ill and comforting the down hearted among men.

Psalm 92 is a celebration of blessings received through the Creator. Those who ignore Him are brutish (like animals), no better in life and practice than a beast. Their carcasses will be strewn in the field as mown down grass. How sad! How deserving! Meanwhile, the godly will emerge victoriously unscathed from attacks of the enemies of Christ. Not left mown down in the field but planted in the House of God. What imagery, what security, what care. As trees, noble, long lived, bearing fruit even on through old age. Not drying up and perishing in one summer’s week but flourishing spiritually, even as the bodily aches and wrinkles of old age advance. The spirit and soul need not age but can enjoy increasing growth and continued vibrant communion and fellowship with God, His people and in His work.

Even though rest and spiritual uplifting were most essential in the rigors of making a living by tilling the ground cursed by sin the Sabbath was soon abandoned. The benefits of a restful, festive Sabbath remembrance of

the Creator's love in creation and blessing were lost. But the Sabbath also held a promise embedded in it. A promise of eternal rest from rigorous labors. A promise of a new Creation ultimately replacing an old, sin ruined creation. A release and rest from the curse of sin. And God has indeed sent His Son to accomplish that very thing. Those that are in Christ Jesus are a new creation, old things have passed away, 2Corinthians 5:17-21. But the new creation is spiritual at present, still hidden in mortal bodies. But bodies which will be changed to be like His glorious body.

Similarly the whole earth as it now is will also be claimed for God by His Agent the Lord Jesus Christ, the Jew's Messiah. Psalm 93 looks forward to that time in which righteousness will **reign** over the whole earth and the house of the Lord will indeed be characterized as **holy**. The Lord Jesus will return and establish righteousness and peace on the earth and restore this sin ravaged earth to beauty, peace and productivity. (We will be with Him and reign with Him then.) After His 1000 years reign, heaven will cast its final judgement upon the last sinful, rebellious men then living on earth. Shortly thereafter there will be new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness will **dwell**, 2Peter 3:9-14; Revelation 20:6-10; 21:7-8. No sin there, only joy, peace and purity for God will dwell there forever.

Meanwhile, **holiness becometh thine house forever O Jehovah**. That universal principle applies here and now with us. For the believers on earth are God's House in this age. And we are to take care that it is maintained holy. The entire worldwide church of God on earth, comprising

all believers, is God's house on earth. It is to be holy, Ephesians 2:22; 1Peter 2:5. Each local assembly is God's house in that locale. Each assembly is to be holy, 1Corinthians 3:17; 2Corinthians 6:16. Our own physical bodies are also to be holy temples of God, 1Corinthians 6:19.

1Timothy 3:14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

1Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

See also

Holiness becoming to God is to characterize our personal lives, our assemblies and the fellowship of assemblies today. How we have failed at every level! Yet what a blessing to be counted God's temple on earth today. And what a blessing to enjoy the prospect of reigning over the earth with the Lord Jesus Christ, though we share in His rejection now. May we at every level aspire to the holiness becoming to Him.

By Ron Canner, April 16, 2008

Wonderful Saviour, blessed Redeemer!
Ever in glory, dwelling above;
Yet in His mercy tenderly smiling,
Over the children bending in love.

Refrain
We will adore Him, gather and praise Him,
Voices in concert joyfully blend!
His be the kingdom, power and glory,
Now and forever, world without end!

Sing of His greatness, infinite greatness,
Sing of His goodness day after day;
Guarding from evil, shielding from danger,
Leading us onward, cheering the way.

He is our refuge, He is our safeguard,
Peace to the youthful kindly He brings;
Sweet is the promise, He will protect us,
He will defend us under His wings. (316 G&T)

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Peoples and realms of every tongue,
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Blessings abound wherever He reigns,
The prisoners leap to loose their chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

Where He displays His healing power,
Death and the curse shall reign no more;
But Adam's race in Him shall boast
More blessings far than Adam lost.

Then all the earth shall rise and bring
Peculiar honors to its King;
Angels respond with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen. (357 G&T)