

Blessed to Be A Blessing

Psalm 111:10-112:10

Introduction:

- Psalm 112 is grouped together with Psalm 111 and 113. All of them begin with the word, “Hallelujah” (Praise the Lord). They are hymns.
- Psalms 111 and 112 are acrostics: they have 22 lines, and each line begins with each of the 22 Hebrew alphabet.
- Psalms 111 and 112 are related to one another. Some of the subjects will flow from Psalm 111 to 112. 111 focuses on the person of God, and 112 focuses on the man of God. In summary, Psalm 111 praises God for the goodness of God displayed in his works, and Psalm 112 praises God for the blessings upon those who fear the Lord, those who find great delight in God’s word.

Psalm 111

¹ Praise the LORD.

*I will extol the LORD with all my heart
in the council of the upright and in the assembly.*

² Great are the works of the LORD;
they are pondered by all who delight in them.

³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds,
and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered;
the LORD is gracious and compassionate.

⁵ He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.

⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works,
giving them the lands of other nations.

⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.

⁸ They are established for ever and ever,
enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹ He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.

Psalm 112

¹ Praise the LORD.

*Blessed are those who fear the LORD,
who find great delight in his commands.*

² Their children will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches are in their houses,
and their righteousness endures forever.

⁴ Even in darkness light dawns for the upright,
for those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous.

⁵ Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely,
who conduct their affairs with justice.

⁶ Surely the righteous will never be shaken;
they will be remembered forever.

⁷ They will have no fear of bad news;
their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

⁸ Their hearts are secure, they will have no fear;
in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

⁹ They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor,
their righteousness endures forever;
their horn will be lifted high in honor.

¹⁰ The wicked will see and be vexed,
they will gnash their teeth and waste away;
the longings of the wicked will come to nothing.

1. Blessing: Restoration of Relationship (111:10-112:1)

¹⁰ *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.*

¹ *Praise the LORD.*

*Blessed are those who fear the LORD,
who find great delight in his commands.*

- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”: the book of Proverbs tells us that godly wisdom can only be acquired through a relationship with God. The fear of the Lord can be defined as a holy reverence towards who God is (his holiness, his majesty, power, wrath, etc.). That reverence brings us to humility, to a contrite heart, to tremble at the presence and voice of God, leading us to respond in obedience.
- When the characters in the bible encounter God, there is a sense of awe, reverence, fear and trembling. When Moses met the Lord in the burning bush, he hid his face because he was afraid to look at God. When God spoke to the Israelites from the mountain, the people trembled and told Moses they do not want to hear from God directly anymore, they wanted Moses to be their mediator with God. When Isaiah saw God in a vision, he said, “woe to me” because he was made aware of God’s holiness and his sinfulness, and that brought him a sense of condemnation. When we see God for who he is, we should be filled with the fear of the Lord, the healthy holy reverence towards the God who is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-present.
- Psalm 112:1 tells us the fear of the Lord and delighting in his commands goes together. The fear of the Lord leads us to follow and delight in his word. As we stand in awe of God, we recognize the power and truth in the words of the One who is sovereign, holy, and majestic, whose words brought the universe to existence. The meditation and obedience of God’s word will in return fuel our fear of the Lord, because as we continue to know God deeply and intimately, we continue to be grateful, to stand in awe and reverence of him.

Genesis 12:2-3

² *“I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;*

*I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.*

³ *I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”*

Blessings:

- The Lord became the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the people of Israel, and they became his people. They had a covenantal relationship with their Creator. They had access, communion and fellowship with the God of the universe. Abraham was called a friend of God. He walked with God and spoke with God. Moses communed face to face with God. Abraham and Moses were blessed because of their relationship with God.

- David was called a man after God’s heart. Even though he had wealth, status, and land, when he sinned against God, he pleaded for the spirit of God to not depart from him. He understood that the presence of God, the communion with God is the greatest blessing.
- Throughout the history of Israel, God protected them, provided for them, and directed them. They were loved and cared for. God also gave them his word, the Torah, the law, so that they would know him, so that they could follow and obey him. The inheritance, the blessing was having God with them.

2. Blessed to be a Blessing: Image Bearer (112:4-5, 9)

Psalm 112	Psalm 111
<p>⁴ Even in darkness light dawns for the <i>upright</i>, for <i>those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous</i>.</p> <p>⁵ Good will come to those who are <i>generous and lend freely</i>, who <i>conduct their affairs with justice</i>.</p> <p>⁹ They have <i>freely scattered their gifts to the poor</i>, <i>their righteousness endures forever</i>; <i>their horn will be lifted high in honor</i>.</p>	<p>³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds, and <i>his righteousness endures forever</i>.</p> <p>⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered; <i>the LORD is gracious and compassionate</i>.</p> <p>⁵ He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.</p> <p>⁷ <i>The works of his hands are faithful and just</i>; all his precepts are trustworthy.</p> <p>⁸ They are established for ever and ever, enacted in <i>faithfulness and uprightness</i>.</p>

- The words that were used to describe God in Psalm 111 is describes the man of God in Psalm 112 (righteousness endures forever v. 3, gracious and compassionate v. 4, provides food, which is the characteristic of being generous v. 5, just v. 7, upright v. 8).
- The covenantal blessing restores the identity of God’s people.

Genesis 1:27, “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

Genesis 12:3, “and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

- Humankind was created in the image of God, the image of our Creator. Intrinsically, we all yearn to know our Creator. We were created with a capacity to worship our Creator. After the Fall, sin has tarnished that image, and mankind begin to worship other gods and other idols.
- Being God’s covenantal people, Israel was restored to their identity as image bearers. And they were given the mandate to bear God’s image, to represent God to the world, so that all people will be blessed by knowing and returning to the worship of their Creator, to their true God. Israel was called to be the beacon of light that leads people back to their Creator.
- Unfortunately, Israel did not fulfil their calling as image bearers. Instead, they were influenced by the other nations, and they became more like them. They rebelled against God; and they worshipped idols.
- Although Israel was unfaithful, God was faithful to his covenant. God sent his son, Jesus, to fulfil Israel’s calling in pointing mankind to God. Being God himself, he was the perfect image of God. He showed us the perfect example of being an image bearer. He also broke the barriers between Jews

and Gentiles, bringing the Good News of God's love and salvation to all nations, to people of every tribe and tongue. All are called to worship the Lord, all are given the blessing to be God's people.

- We are made in the image of God. Our identity as image bearers is restored through the cross. We carry the mandate of representing God to others. God reveals who he is, his character through his word. Through the meditation of his word, we are changed to be more like Christ, to be image bearers who represent God to the world. The meditation of God's word helps us work out our affections, our priorities, and our values. What is important to God becomes important to us.
- V. 4: gracious and compassionate and righteous – it was his grace and compassion that drove God to save us even when we were still sinners, when we do not deserve it. God repeatedly delivered Israel from their enemies even though Israel was disobedient and unfaithful. And it was grace and compassion that led Jesus to the cross, taking our place for punishment.
- Vv. 5 & 9: generous, justice – God cares for the poor, the weak, those who cannot care for themselves, and God wanted his people to care for them. God cares for justice, and he hates evil. When Jesus came, he showed us generosity and justice. He ministered to the poor, to the widow, to the sick, to the outcast, he provided food for the people, and he generously sacrificed his life, in replacement of ours, to fulfil God's justice towards sin.
- As we meditate on these truths, as we receive God's grace and mercy, we become people who are grateful, we stand in reverence and holy fear towards the Lord, and it transforms us to be like Christ, to be gracious, compassionate and generous to others, as God is to us. We see the heart of God, and we want to reflect that to others.
- As the man of God exemplifies these characters of God in this psalm, he is contented. His character is not dependent on his circumstances, whether he has plenty or little, whether life is good and well for him, or he is in darkness. He cared for others because God cares for others. As we bear God's image, as we change into his likeness, we are blessed, and we become a blessing to others. Through us, the people around us become recipients of God's kindness and generosity.

Acts 2:41-47

⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- The Lord used their devotion towards the word, their love for others, their generosity in sharing and caring for one another, to bring more people back to him.

3. Trusting the Lord: God Will Honour His Work (112:6-8, 10)

⁶ Surely the righteous *will never be shaken;*
they will be remembered forever.

⁷ They *will have no fear of bad news;*
their hearts are steadfast,
trusting in the LORD.

⁸ Their *hearts are secure,*
they will have no fear;
in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

- The righteous will never be shaken because they trust in the Lord. As the righteous fear the Lord and delight in his commands, doing his work by bearing his image to others, the Lord will take care of them. He will honour his work throughout eternity. They will not fear of bad news, their hearts are steadfast and secure. They trust that the Lord who ordained and remembers his covenant will remember them and honour them.
- Their security and steadfastness are not circumstantial or temporary. They are not based on the absence of trouble or the removal of their foes. The righteous are secure and steadfast because they can trust the Lord. The Lord (in Psalm 111):

- <i>provides food for those who fear him (v. 5a)</i>
- <i>remembers his covenant forever (v. 5b)</i>
- <i>is faithful and just (v. 7a)</i>
- <i>all his precepts are trustworthy (v. 7b)</i>
- <i>provided redemption for his people (v. 9a)</i>
- <i>he ordained his covenant forever (v. 9b)</i>

¹⁰ The wicked will see and be vexed,
they will gnash their teeth and waste away;
the longings of the wicked will come to nothing.

- The wicked will get angry. But, their attempts to disrupt or hinder God's work will be in vain. Nothing they plan will do anything to God's plan. As we represent God, bearing his image, we can be assured that nothing can stop his work.

Psalm 2:1-6

*¹ Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?*

*² The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,*

*³ “Let us break their chains
and throw off their shackles.”*

*⁴ The One enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord scoffs at them.*

*⁵ He rebukes them in his anger
and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,*

*⁶ “I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.”*

- Throughout the bible, Satan tries to stop God’s work. He incites people to do wicked things. He distracts people from God with temptations, luring them away. There are times men and women fell and sinned against God. There are even times it seems like evil has the upper hand. But, God’s plan to save people continues, he draws people back to him, he continues to love and care for his people. His work never ceases. The work of the enemy cannot hinder the plans of God. They plot in vain. (E.g., Joseph, Saul, Ahab and Jezebel, the death of Jesus)
- The resurrection of Jesus was the pinnacle of God’s redemption plan. God’s victory is celebrated, and the disciples begin to courageously preach about the Good News of salvation and redemption in Jesus Christ. However, it wasn’t long before they started to face opposition and were persecuted. But, that did not stop them. The Gospel continued to flourish despite the persecution, and it went to the ends of the earth.
- In many nations, Christians are still being persecuted. Just like the early church, instead of being wiped out, the persecuted church continues to grow more rapidly. They seek the Lord more fervently, devoting themselves to scripture and prayer. They encounter God’s love and strength in their hardship, and they count it a blessing. They experience and know the blessing of those who fear the Lord, those who find great delight in his word. They continue to bear witness towards the Gospel. They shine God’s light, representing him, in their dark chaotic circumstances. The work they do for Christ will not be stopped. God will honour them. They will be glorified together with Christ.
- God’s work doesn’t stop regardless of the circumstances we are in. As we seek God fervently, as we devote ourselves to scripture, meditating and obeying his word, our hearts will become steadfast and secure. We will begin to experience the blessing of “Emmanuel” – God with us, as we learn to walk with God the way Abraham, Moses and David did. We will live in our true calling and purpose, bearing the image of God to the world, being a blessing to others, bringing people back to God. And we will not fear, because we know God is victorious. His enemies will be his footstool. His work continues and in the last days, He will rule in New Heavens, where we will worship and praise him, and we will be vindicated, honoured and glorified for the works that we do for him.

Prayer

*¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.*

¹ Praise the LORD.

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Church

- Wisdom and God's direction to restart our physical service.
- We will hunger for God, through prayer and the meditation of God's word.
- We will be focus on what is important, instead of pursuing earthly treasures.
- Transformative work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.
- We will be faithful to welcome and minister to all the people that God sends to us.
- We will be a place of healing, restoration and reconciliation.
- Unity based on God's love and truth: breaking barriers between people from different groups.
- Workplaces: we will respond to our calling in the harvest field, representing Christ to the world.
- Compassion and wisdom to help those who are in need.
- Salvation for our loved ones.
- Ministries:
 - Open doors
 - Wisdom and discernment to reach out and minister
 - Sensitive to the needs of the people

Covid-19

- Those who are sick, those who have lost loved ones
- Healing and deliverance
- Government: wisdom and compassion
- Economy
- Mental health, domestic abuse
- Church: to bring hope with the Gospel

Malaysia

- Leadership: righteousness, integrity, compassion for the people
- Unity: between all people group
- Justice and mercy: care for the marginalized (the poor, oppressed, widows, orphans, foreigners)
- Church: instruments of love and unity, prophetic voice to the nation
- Salvation

