

They shall mount up...

ON EAGLES' WINGS



AERY NUGGETS

...with wings as eagles.

Isaiah 40:31

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Psalm 1

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A couple of years ago, while on a family trip to the Sonoran Desert in southern Arizona, I drank in the incredible beauty of the desert landscape through the eyes of my wife and children. It was the first week of June, and all the cacti were in bloom, from the giant saguaro to the prickly pear—rare, I'm told, for that time of year. But just the same, on our mapped out hike along the trail that day, everything as far as the eye could see appeared to be bursting forth with life and color. The early morning air was filled with the songs and chatter of the colorful desert birds, and near our path, a small stream rippled along. Plants were everywhere along this stream; and as I touched certain samples of the foliage near our walkway, I could just feel the vitality of the local flora which defied the arid climate by flourishing on the small amount of available water! And, I marveled at such a display of life and beauty, even in desert places!

As Christians, you and I should manifest abundant and flourishing life, even in a "dry and thirsty land where no water is." Life, and abundant life, is precisely what each of us who are believers have through our Lord Jesus Christ as a gift of His love. The Lord Jesus said in John 10:10, "...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly". But, how do we manifest such life on our wilderness path through a fallen world? Psalm 1, verses 1-3 outline how the child of God flourishes, even in desert scenes.

In the first verse we read, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful". The people who are of this world have their own objectives which are not guided by the Holy Spirit, and they have their own ways of achieving their desired ends. In Psalm 1, these people are referred to as the "ungodly," and in verses 4-6, we find that in verse 4 that they are without substance really, and will

ultimately be swept away like chaff before the wind; they may scoff at the people of God and despise our motives and lifestyle, but they are not to be envied or admired, and certainly not to be emulated. We read in verse 5, "...the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous". So for the child of God in this world to be blessed and to be a blessing to others, we need to walk in fellowship with the Lord, not to follow the sinful world around us with its ungodly appetites and ways.

So, what should occupy the hearts of the children of God in this scene? We read in verse 2: "But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night". I love that word "delight"! For the Christian, reading the Word of God is not just a duty or even a preference, but it is a delight to our souls; the child of God thirsts for the Word day and night, for that is where we receive instruction from the Lord and learn about His will for our lives—that is our sustenance. And when we are occupied with Christ and His Word, and refuse the ways of the world, then we will indeed flourish and be fruitful, showing forth the signs of the life that is within us by His Grace, the new life in Christ; and that for all the world to see—the beautiful character of a Christian life. We read in verse 3, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper".





What a lovely picture is that tree planted beside the river of water! That tree with its beautiful leaves and fruitfulness is just what a child of God should want to be. My dear friend, just like this tree, we Christians have a river—this is the unfailing resource of life that is from God, which we access by occupation with Him and with His Word, and by dependence upon His Grace. This river from God never dries up, and its unfailing resources are there for our daily sustenance. Just like the plants along the creek in the southwestern Arizona desert which I observed, we too can thrive, even in a desert world, showing forth the beauty and vitality of a godly life, and being fruitful in the sight of the Lord, and a channel of blessing for all we encounter. Now, does the world take note of such a testimony? I do believe that even those who are scornful of God and His people must respect the characteristics of a godly life—charity, humility, and moral integrity would certainly be signs of the life within us; leaves marred by worldliness and inconsistency would weaken that testimony for sure. So, what do our leaves look like just now? Are they green and lush, or are they curled and showing signs of dryness and stress? Praise God for His abundant provision for His children!

But, my dear friend, the last phrase in verse 3 reads, "...and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper". Perhaps just now, you are not seeing this prosperity in your life. Perhaps despite all your hard work and tearful efforts, you find failures and disappointments at every turn. Perhaps your way is barred by thorns and rocky ways, and every step is painful and fraught with dangers. Take heart dear Christian, times of difficulty do not change the faithfulness of God. These are just the times where faith comes in to remind us that for the child of God, we are never at the mercy of the circumstances around us. God will use any situation, even the tough times along difficult pathways, to ultimately bless us: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose," (Romans 8:28).

Rough patches in the road are not the signs of failure and doom for the Christian, but are merely opportunities for God to work good in our lives, whether this end is clearly evident to us or not. You can depend on this! The child of God can hold fast to His Word, and trust on Him, daily drinking in His abundant resources that will sustain our vitality: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," (II Corinthians 12:9).

My dear reader, are you a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, then you are one of the righteous being spoken of in Psalm 1. You will be able to thrive and be fruitful, despite the dryness of the land, as you walk in fellowship with Christ and in dependence on Him, regardless of the difficult and unpleasant circumstances that may attend your way. But, on the other hand, if you have never believed on Christ as your personal Savior, then these words will not be of much comfort to you, and you really cannot hope to truly flourish in this life, just as a tree cannot long survive without a source of water. That resource that you desperately need is Christ Jesus. It is my prayer that you believe on Him just now. To the woman of Samaria, the Lord Jesus said, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life," (John 4:14). That woman believed and received life; then, she told others who also believed on the Lord Jesus. Will you believe and receive life? "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John 3: 16).



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