

Psalms 147:1 ¶ Praise ye the LORD: for *it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.*

Hallelujah! The psalmist declares it is a good (loving) and pleasant (sweet) thing to sing praises to “our” God (The Supreme Being). He notes that praise is comely (suitable and beautiful). I believe it is not only pleasing to God, it also uplifts us personally when we praise the LORD. Praise and worship music lifts me up and encourages me as it helps me focus on my LORD and my many blessings from Him.

Psalms 147:2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

The wording of this psalm seems to date this psalm to the time after the captives in Babylon began returning to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple. “Outcasts” makes reference to those who have been driven away, overthrown.

Though it was the people who would do the actual work, it was the LORD that provided for them to rebuild the city and the temple—despite how slowly they went about the task. He provided leaders like Nehemiah to spur them on as well as the necessary resources from the ruling authorities (e.g., Cyrus and Artaxerxes).

Psalms 147:3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

As the people returned from captivity, they were broken hearted when they saw the remains of their once beautiful city. The Hebrew for wounds also makes reference to sorrow, which I think would have been the better choice in context. As they began to obey the LORD and rebuild the city and the temple, it brought healing and encouragement.

I believe the truth stated in this verse applies to all those that follow the LORD in faith and obedience. Though the psalmist may have been writing in reference to the returning captives, God’s truth never changes.

The Hebrew for “healeth” states “to mend (by stitching)...make whole.” That spoke to me of specific personal care and involvement in making one whole again—be it spiritual or physical healing (and I think both are included). “Bindeth up” states “to wrap firmly...to rule...to wrap about.” That gives me a picture of a loving Father’s arms holding His child tightly and carefully protecting that child from anything not for the good.

Spurgeon: "The kings of the earth think to be great through their loftiness; but Jehovah becomes really so by his condescension. Behold, the Most High has to do with the sick and the sorry, with the wretched and the wounded!...He deigns to handle and heal broken hearts: he himself lays on the ointment of grace, and the soft bandages of love, and thus binds up the bleeding wounds of those convinced of sin."

Psalms 147:4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by *their* names.

Psalms 147:5 Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite.

God is so intimately involved with His creation that He has weighed out and numbered (from the Hebrew) the stars and has given each of them a name. Truly only a GREAT God is capable of such a thing. His wisdom is unsearchable, far beyond our understanding. Other scripture supports this truth.

Isaiah 40:28 "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Romans 11:33 "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Chuck Smith: "It is estimated that there are perhaps as many stars in the heavens as there are grains of sand upon the earth. Some have estimated there to be ten to the twenty-fifth power number of stars. Or ten with twenty-five zeroes tacked on behind. The Milky Way galaxy which our solar system is a part is just one of the many galaxies. Outside of us, the next one is the Andromeda galaxy and they're discovering new galaxies all the time. And the galaxies, each of them contain billions of stars."

Psalms 147:6 The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

The psalmist is definitely making a contrast between the meek and the wicked. I've always heard meekness identified as strength under control, and I think that is a valid application from the Hebrew when thinking of Jesus and Moses etc. as being meek. It is also true that the term is used to describe those who suffer quietly so to speak. I thought it was interesting that the Hebrew for "lifteth up" made reference to

restoration. It speaks to the fact that God is ready to restore the meek to a place of respect, strength and honor when He humiliates the wicked with eternal condemnation in hell.

Psalms 147:7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

Psalms 147:8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

Psalms 147:9 He giveth to the beast his food, *and* to the young ravens which cry.

The psalmist again urges the people to sing a song of thanksgiving to the LORD and sing His praises to the accompaniment of instruments. He then lists several things for which they can praise and thank God; it is basically acknowledging the process that produces our food.

- for covering the heaven with clouds, produced by condensing water vapors that produce the rain.
- for preparing rain for the earth, the water necessary for the growth of crops. It also refills the natural reservoirs of water necessary to life.
- for making the grass to grow, as well as the trees and plants that provide our food.
- for providing food for the animals that supply us with meat, materials for clothing, etc.—and important in the psalmist’s day, the ability to offer sacrifices.

Psalms 147:10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

Psalms 147:11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

The LORD doesn’t take pleasure in the strength of animals or men. He isn’t impressed by either, as we are wont to be. He is the one that gave them such prowess. The LORD derives pleasure from those that hold Him in reverence and live by faith in dependence on His mercy, love and kindness.

Psalms 147:12 ¶ Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

Psalms 147:13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

Psalms 147:14 He maketh peace *in* thy borders, *and* filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.

The psalmist urges the people of Jerusalem (as representing the whole of Israel) for strengthening them and blessing them as they worked at rebuilding their nation. They

should recognize Him as the source of peace and provision they needed to prosper. They should take to heart the truth of the previous two verses every time they are confronted by the enemy. The strength of horses and men are nothing compared to the strength with which God empowers those that trust in Him.

Psalms 147:15 He sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

This is an interesting verse. God is the One that has ensured the spread of His word throughout the world. Frankly, it happened swiftly (relatively speaking) despite the lack of technology from which we benefit today.

Psalms 147:16 He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.

Psalms 147:17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?

Psalms 147:18 He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

Maybe the psalmist was inspired by winter weather as he describes how the LORD sends the white snow and frost to cover the ground. Sometimes He sends sleet and/or hail that fall in pieces like tiny pebbles or rocks. All these come when the earth is cold, and man could not survive without God's provision of warm clothing and shelter.

Then, at His word, He sends the sun to melt the ice, the winds to blow (either in blessing or in judgment) and the waters to flow freely. In other words, the weather is subject to His command.

Psalms 147:19 He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

Psalms 147:20 He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his judgments, they have not known them.* Praise ye the LORD.

As he closes, the psalmist notes how the people of Israel were privileged to receive His word, His law. They were singled out among the nations for such privilege. The nations would only learn of God's word and His law as the people of Israel were faithful to share it.

That is a truth that applies to all that follow the LORD in faith today. The people of the world will only learn the truth of God's word as we are faithful to share it with them—both in word and action. Hallelujah!! Praise ye the LORD!