

Psalm 112:1-10

This psalm of praise emphasizes the righteousness and the uprightness of one who fears the Lord.

- I. **The Godly Person's Consecration. V. 1,4-5,9**
 - a. He fears God and loves His word. V. 1 Happy is the one who does what God commands.
 - b. He is compassionate and righteous. V. 4 Light burst in when he's overtaken by darkness.
 - c. He gives freely and generously. V. 4-5,9 He conducts his business fairly.
- II. **The Godly Person's Compensation. V. 2-3, 6-8,9,10**
 - a. His children will be successful. V. 2 An entire generation will be blessed.
 - b. He will have influence and honor. V. 9
 - c. His financial needs are met. V. 3
 - d. He is secure and never shaken by evil circumstances. V. 6
 - e. He and his good deeds are not forgotten. V. 3, 6,9 The righteous are long remembered.
 - f. He does not fear bad news. V. 7-8 He confidently trust the Lord.
 - g. He triumphs over his foes. V. 8,10 He is confident and fearless. As a result, the hopes of the wicked are thwarted.

Looking Deeper at Ps. 112

- v1** *Hallelujah!
(Aleph) The man that is afraid of the *LORD will be very happy.
(Beth) It will give him pleasure when he obeys the *LORD's rules.
- v2** (Gimel) His children will become powerful in the land.
(Daleth) (The *LORD) will do good things for the good people in his family.
- v3** (He) He will be a rich man with valuable things in his house.
(Vav) He will always have (God's gift) of *righteousness.
- v4** (Zayin) A good man is like a light that shines in dark (places).
(Heth) He is kind and loving and *righteous.
- v5** (Teth) A good man is kind and lends (to people).
(Yod) He is fair in everything that he does.
- v6** (Kaph) So (a good man) will never fail.
(Lamed) (People) will always remember a *righteous man.
- v7** (Mem) He is not afraid of bad news.
(Nun) His *heart is *steady and he *trusts in the *LORD.
- v8** (Samech) His *heart is safe. And he will not be afraid,
(Ayin) until (God) destroys his enemies.
- v9** (Pe) He gives a lot to poor people.
(Tsade) He will always be *righteous.
(Qoph) He will be powerful. And people will say that he is good.
- v10** (Resh) The bad man will see it and be angry.
(Shin) He will *gnash his teeth together, then *disappear.
(Tav) The things that the bad man wants will not happen.

The Story of Psalm 112

Bible students think that Psalm 112 follows Psalm 111 in a special way. Psalm 111 is about a *righteous God. Psalm 112 is about the man that God makes *righteous. Now the word "**righteous" in the Bible is a special word. It means "always doing what is right". Only God is really *righteous. But the people that love and obey God are also *righteous. They are not *righteous because they always do what is right. Sometimes they do what is not right! They are *righteous because God gives them the gift of righteousness. This means that when God looks at them, he sees them as *righteous! Often, their family and friends do not see this, but God does. Righteousness is a gift that God gives to people. He gives it to people who:

- are sorry that they have done wrong things;
- promise to try not to do them again;
- take the help that God gives to them.

We do not know who wrote Psalm 112. And we do not know when they wrote it. It was probably after the *exile ended. That was 500 years before Jesus Christ came to the earth as a man. The *exile was when the King of Babylon took the

*Jews to Babylon. They were there for 70 years. After they came back, they made the Book of Psalms. They used it in the new *temple (house of God in Jerusalem) that they built. Psalm 111 was about the *righteousness of God. So someone wrote Psalm 112 to describe the man that God made *righteous.

Psalm 112 is a special kind of poem. A poem is a beautiful way to use words. All the psalms are Hebrew *poems, but some of them are acrostic *poems. Hebrew is the language that the *Jews spoke. They used it to write their Bible. An acrostic psalm has one verse or part of a verse that begins with the first letter of the alphabet. The next begins with the next letter, and so on. This is very difficult to do when you translate the psalms into another language. This set of psalms does it with Psalms 9 and 10, but not with Psalm 112. But we have put the letters of the Hebrew alphabet before each part. So, after the first "**hallelujah" (that means "**praise the *LORD" or "tell the *LORD that he is very great") there are 22 lines in the psalm. This is because there are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. "**LORD" is a special name for God. The people that love and obey him use it.

What Psalm 112 means

Verse 1. A better English word for "afraid" is "in awe". It means more than being afraid. It also means to want to love and obey the person that you are afraid of!

Verse 2. "His children" means more than just his children. It means children, grandchildren and their children or grandchildren, for many centuries. Another word is "descendants".

Verse 3. We do not know what the valuable things were in the *psalmist's day. The *psalmist wrote the psalm. Often today, the *LORD's people are not rich. And they do not have much that is valuable.

Verse 4. Bible students are not sure who "he" is in the "heth" part. Some think that it is the *LORD. But other students think that it is the good man. Our translation makes it mean the good man. This is because the other verses (which we call the context) are all about the good man.

Verse 7. In Hebrew *poems, "**heart" means "mind", the part of us that thinks. A steady *heart is one that does not change. It does not think something different when bad news comes. This is because the person trusts in the *LORD. To trust in the *LORD is to know that the *LORD will give you help when you need it.

Verse 8. "Until (God) destroys his enemies" is "until what the good man wants to happen to his enemies does happen" in the Hebrew Bible. This translation decides that the good man wants God to destroy these enemies.

Verse 10. When the bad man sees what happens to the good man, he is angry. He will "gnash his teeth together" because he is so angry. "Gnash his teeth" means "hit his teeth together". It was a *Jewish way to say (idiom) that someone is very angry. "Disappear" means the opposite of "appear". This is because God will not let the bad man have his way. "Not to have his way" means "what he wants to happen will not happen". Nobody will see the bad man any more.

Something to do

1. Study some of the other acrostic psalms, like 9, 10, 35, 37, 111, 119 and 145.
2. Learn to say verse 1 of the psalm by *heart. ("By *heart" means without looking at the words.)

Word List

covenant ~ two people have agreed what each should do (here, God and his people). Look in Psalm 120 about the covenant.

disappear ~ the opposite of appear.

exile ~ away from your own country.

gnash ~ to hit together (usually teeth) when angry.

hallelujah ~ say that the *LORD is great. (Jah is *Hebrew for *LORD.)

heart ~ part of the body. *Jews believed that you thought in your heart.

Hebrew ~ the language that the Jews spoke; they wrote the Psalms in Hebrew.

Jew ~ a person who is born from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their children.

Jewish ~ a word that describes a *Jew or anything to do with a *Jew.

LORD ~ the *covenant name for God (in a *covenant you agree with someone).

poem ~ using words in a special (often very beautiful) way.

praise ~ to say how great someone is; or, words that say how great someone is.

psalmist ~ the person that wrote a psalm (or psalms).

righteous ~ very good (only God is really righteous). God says that the people who love and obey him are righteous. Sometimes we say they are "the righteous", meaning "righteous people". Look after Psalm 5 in Book 1 of the Psalms of David for more about the word "righteous".

temple ~ a place where people meet to worship God.