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PSALM 92

Psalms – Book IV – Series

[PRAYER] Lord, today we ask that you would be working in our lives. We thank you for the events of this week. As we go forward into this next week we do not know what will happen and that's why we need your presence so near to us. We need to cling to who you are. This morning, Father, we want to start this week by dedicating our hearts to you and asking you to draw us close to you. Reveal to us the ways that you're working around us that we don't even see sometimes. Reveal to us your power.

Lord, I ask that you would reveal your power to students that are here as they're in class working on assignments or spending time with people. I pray that you would reveal your power in the midst of those situations. I ask that you would cause us each one to commit ourselves to you daily, that the trivia things of life would not become trivial, but they'll become meaningful and important and significant because you are at work through them.

This morning, Father, as we come before you we ask that you would be honored in our hearts, as we spend some time looking at this psalm that you would teach us what it means to honor you and thank you and to live for you. So we open our hearts and ask for you to do that surgery inside that's necessary in each one of us, sometimes different than a person sitting next to us. But we ask that you would do that work as you often do this morning. In Jesus' name, amen.

Today we're going to look at Psalm 92. I want to teach you a little bit about poetry in the Old Testament or in Hebrew culture so that you understand the genre that we're in and it's more meaningful to you.

In our western culture, at least in English poetry, poetry has to do with rhyme and meter. Roses are red, violets are blue... and you can imagine what's coming next because that's how it all fits in. That's the way poetry is established in our culture, our language. But that's not the case in Hebrew poetry. Hebrew poetry has to do with vividness of pictures described in words and then something that's called parallelism.

If you open your Bible to Psalm 92, you're going to see that there are groups (and we're going to call them units) of phrases. Usually two, sometimes three come in a unit. Now you miss this in the King James Version because the King James Version doesn't set it out like this, but in most any other modern translation they try to capture the Hebrew poetry parallelism in the text, so you'll see them on lines. That's why the lines are separated. The lines advance.

Line 1 makes a statement and line 2 may be a contrast sometimes. Sometimes it's an elaboration on the first statement, sometimes it's a conclusion based on that first statement. Sometimes it's just a restatement of the same idea with different words. It's called parallelism and that's what makes Hebrew poetry what it is.

There are a number of different kinds of poems in the book of Psalms. One is an acrostic psalm where you have every letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *Alef, Bet, Gimel, Dalet*, and so on, when the line starts with that letter and so it goes right through the psalm that way. There are other psalms that are alliterated in other ways.

Now the psalm we're going to look at today, Psalm 92, is a good example of Hebrew poetry. In fact let's just take a moment and go through. I want to show you the poetry. Look at verse 1.

*It is good to praise the Lord
and make music to your name, O Most High,*

So that's your unit number 1. Notice it says *it is good to praise the Lord* and then it elaborates on that – *to make music to your name, O Most High*.

Now the idea continues in the next phrase because the sentence isn't over, but we have another unit. Verse 2:

*proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,*

So it's just a continuation of that same idea but two phrases.

The next one, verse 3:
*to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.*

So it's restating that with different words, just articulating that same idea.

Now if we go on to verse 4 do you see it says:
For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord (and then we elaborate on that);
I sing for joy at what your hands have done. So it's an elaboration of that.

Verse 5 says:
*How great are your works, Lord,
how profound your thoughts!*

It's just another way of saying the same kind of thing. It's Hebrew poetry.

In verse 6:
*Senseless people do not know,
fools do not understand,*

It's a way of restating the same thing.

Verse 7 or unit 7:

*that though the wicked spring up like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they will be destroyed forever.*

So that's elaborating and continuing on the thought in that parallelism in that passage.

Notice verse 8. If you're reading through this, you would look at verse 8 and say, "Something is wrong with verse 8," because verse 8 only has one phrase.

But you, LORD, are forever exalted.

There's nothing else there. You're going, "Something is wrong with this poem. We're missing a line." Which causes you to think, "What's going on here?" I'll explain in a moment.

Verse 9:

*For surely your enemies, Lord,
surely your enemies will perish;
all evildoers will be scattered.*

So we have the elaboration taking place [garbled].

Verse 10 says:

You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox (that's an illustration, this picturesque terminology, and then a different illustration to elaborate on the same idea);
fine oils have been poured on me.

Verse 11:

My eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries;
(and then we're going to describe that differently) *my ears have heard the rout of my wicked foes.*

Verse 14:

*They will still bear fruit in old age,
they will stay fresh and green,*

So that's a different way of saying the same thing. I'll explain when we come to it in a few minutes.

Verse 15, the last verse:

*proclaiming, "The Lord is upright;
he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."*

So again, two phrases tying together. That is Hebrew poetry and what it looks like.

Now if you take the psalm and you diagram it, which is what I'm going to do in this particular picture for you, I want you to see that verse 8, the one-liner, is the pinnacle of the psalm. Verses 6-7 are talking about bad guys, verse 9 on the other side is talking about bad guys, and you have the first five verses talking about God is amazing, let's be thankful, and verse 10-15 is God is so amazing, He blesses us all the time. So this is balanced, which you're going to see continually. In Hebrew poetry it's balanced.

That's what you have in the picture of Psalm 92. As we continue through the psalm you're going to get some of those ideas to make sense for you.

In verse 8 the word *LORD* is capitalized. That's the personal name for God, His covenant faithful name, *LORD*. There are three times we're going to see Yahweh on the left and three times we're going to see it on the right. So seven times all together in the midst of this particular psalm.

Notice the superscription on the psalm in your Bible. It says, *A song. Sung on the Sabbath day.* Every Saturday morning during the time of the morning sacrifice, this song would be sung. It was a tradition that they had.

Traditions are valuable because they remind us of things. They create something in us, a feeling that we have. They emotionally help us connect to the situation. If this morning we were to sing *Silent Night*, you would feel uncomfortable because that's part of your tradition that we only sing *Silent Night* at Christmas time. It is a tradition that we do that.

In this case this is a tradition of a song that is sung every week, a song that will reflect thanks. I will be thankful to God this week again. So this beautiful psalm that we're singing is like that. I'm trying to reproduce that a little bit in this song *Baruq Hashem* that we're singing every week. As I do I hope it will draw you into the presence of the Lord as our voices harmonize together in a round that has some simple words, but it's drawing us together and you know that the teaching of a psalm is coming. It's a tradition that takes place.

As I teach parenting seminars around the country, one of the things that I want parents to do is establish a family altar. I'm trying to help parents understand how to have devotions with their kids and make it fun. I don't think it's good to bore kids with the Bible. The Bible is not boring; it's exciting. So let's make it exciting as we're working with our kids and doing things with that.

I suggest to them one of the things you might do is play a song. Choose a song, your family song. It could be a song from *Veggie Tales* for family or it may be a favorite worship song that you have. When you play that song, your family knows it's family time. We're getting together for some worship. It's the same kind of thing, a weekly reminder in the Hebrew culture that we need to be thankful.

That's what verse 1 is going to take us to. Look at verse 1 in Psalm 92. It says, *It is good.* Let's just stop right there.

The word *good* here is *tov*. If you're a Hebrew, a Jewish person, the word *tov* is going to ring true to you because you know that when God created the world after day one He created the light, it says *God saw it and it was tov. It was good.* Day two the land was created; *it was good.* Then we have animals being created and *it was good.* Then we get to the sixth day and God created man and *it was very tov. It was good.* So this word *tov*, good, has to do with design. It's just perfection. It's beautiful.

Now you have to realize what's good here. The goodness that's going to take place is that we praise the Lord or we give thanks to the Lord. That's what verse 1 says. *It is good to give thanks to the Lord or to praise the Lord.* There's something *tov* about that. It's like a puzzle piece.

Some of you like to work on jigsaw puzzles. I know why. Because 500 times in your 500-piece jigsaw puzzle you get to say, "Yes, I got it!" You like success. You like it to fit, and when it fits you go, "Oh!" There's that feeling inside, that *tov* feeling inside that you get by creating or putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

I want you to know there's a piece today in the jigsaw puzzle of our lives that God has tucked away in Psalm 92 and He wants us to know about it. This is very important for your emotional health. You've got to understand that. Grab onto what he says in verse 1. *It is good (it is tov) to give thanks to the Lord or to praise the Lord, and make music to your name, O Most High.*

This idea of giving thanks is the idea of just being a thankful person. *It is good to give thanks to the Lord.* Every Saturday when you get up and you do the morning sacrifice *it is good to give thanks to the Lord.* It is good. I need to remember that. Every week when we come before the Lord we need to remember that.

Now the word *thanks* is the word to throw out, to cast. It's also translated to confess. You just say it. "I'm grateful. Lord, I'm grateful for the things you've made today. I'm grateful for this. I'm grateful for that." *It is good to give thanks to the Lord.*

I think it's really important because it helps us deal with our mental health issues. I'm convinced that being thankful is one of the keys to good mental health in our lives. Negative thinking ruins our days and if we do not come to our lives intentionally, if we just allow our lives to progress then what tends to happen is that the negative emotions of anger or worry or sadness or self-pity tend to dominate our thinking. And then we find ourselves getting into trouble in our minds.

You young people know this. You're laying on your bed after your mom or dad just yelled at you. You're laying there trying to go to sleep, you can't go to sleep, and you start playing it over, right? You're mad because they just told you you couldn't go do something you wanted to do and you don't like that. Maybe they didn't yell at you, but they set some limit. You don't like it and so you sit there in self-pity. "I can't believe it. Next time I see them I'm going to say this." So you can start moving down that path really quick.

If we start hanging in that kind of an attitude or thinking then it goes down this path over and over again. People develop habits in their lives of worrying or self-pity or bitterness because they get stuck in these patterns. I believe the solution is not to talk ourselves back out of them. Our

solution is to stop going down that path. God has given us a plan. That plan is to be thankful for what we have.

Look at verse 2. It says, *proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night*. Every morning we're getting up and we're saying, "Lord, I am so thankful," anticipating the goodness of God for today. And every night when we go to bed we're grateful for the things that He's done. We're grateful for the goodness that He has given to us, and so we're reflecting on that at night.

Compare that, getting up in the morning with thankfulness and going to bed with thankfulness, to what typically happens in our culture. What do you do when you first get up? Grab the newspaper. Look at the news on the internet. That's pretty depressing. What do you do last thing before you go to bed? Look at the latest news or what's going on in the news, on the internet. Wow, that's depressing. Do you see how that can start to affect you and it can start to damage who you are?

God says, "I've got a prescription for that. You having a problem in your life with anger or worry or self-pity? Thankfulness is the key."

This isn't just an Old Testament concept. Let me show you a New Testament verse that says something very similar to that because this is God's solution to worry. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

It is God's solution that if we're struggling anywhere in our emotions that we don't allow them to take our mind down a path that's negative and self-defeating, but rather we allow them to be overcome by this gratefulness that God wants us to have.

It goes on in there to list the instruments that are there. But the point is we need to be thankful. It's hard sometimes. I know. You might say, "I don't have anything to be thankful for." Well you might want to make a list because there are a lot of things.

One elderly man said, "I'm grateful that I can snap, crackle, and pop, and still walk at the same time." We can be thankful for all kinds of things.

One lady says, "I've lost all my teeth, but I've got two left. And praise the Lord they both meet." There's always something you can be thankful for.

My dad would tell the story of the grandpa. The grandpa was sleeping on his recliner chair and his two grandsons decide to play a trick on him. So they took some really smelly cheese, limburger cheese, and they took it and they rubbed it on his moustache while he was sleeping. When he woke up he goes, "[sniff, sniff] Oh this chair stinks!" So he got up and he walks around and he's walking around the room and, "[sniff, sniff] This whole room stinks!" He starts walking around the whole house and as he's walking around, "This whole house stinks!" So he walks outside to get a breath of fresh air on the porch. He takes a deep breath and he goes, "Boy, this

whole world stinks!” My dad would say the moral of that story is this: If you think the whole world stinks, maybe the problem is you.

I would suggest that if we can develop thankfulness in our hearts then we’ll be able to address this issue.

Now go back to verse 2 because there’s our word *chesed* mentioned in verse 2. It’s that word that we see there – *your love in the morning*.

I want to elaborate on this, *chesed*, because it’s such a rich concept that every Jewish believer understood and loved. You have to understand. I want to show you some scriptures about it. It has this meaning that God is so committed to us. He’s committed to us with this tenderness and this compassion that He just envelops us. Even when we run away from Him and we are away and we deny Him, His *chesed* surrounds us again and draws us back. It’s a beautiful word.

So we see in Isaiah 54:10 – *Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love (chesed) for you will not be shaken*. Over and over again we’ll see it in the Old Testament.

I’ll give you another example of this. In Lamentations 3:31-32 – *No one is cast off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love*.

Chesed. You need the *chesed* of God when you’re feeling lonely. You need the *chesed* of God when you’re feeling discouraged or feeling attacked or feeling like you’ve got a problem going on in your life that’s overwhelming or that your health is hurting you. Whatever it is, it’s this word *chesed* that’s so important.

I want to read a quote that is said much better than I can say it. It says this: “The word *chesed* is the descriptor par excellence of God in the Old Testament. The word speaks of a completely undeserved kindness and generosity done by a person who is in a position of power. This was the Israelites’ experience of God. He revealed Himself to them when they were not looking for Him, and He kept His covenant with Him long after their persistent breaking of it had destroyed any reason for His continued keeping of it. Unlike humans, God was not fickle, undependable, or self-serving, or grasping. Instead He was faithful, true, upright, and generous – always.” That’s the idea behind this word *chesed*.

I wonder if the idea of *chesed* is hard for people today to understand because our concept of love today has more to do with romance and dating (a candlelit restaurant and a beautiful sunset). Our movies tell us about a housewife who dumps her balding husband for this shadowy stranger who, with a passionate kiss, is determined to be true love. We focus on love in the short term instead of lifelong loyalty. Is it becoming that rare? As more and more of us grow up in broken families, are we losing our ability to imagine the fact that love never ends?

More and more Christians even talk about this relationship first met, as if we’re dating God. Although that can be rather dramatic and exciting and fun, we have to get down into the nitty-

gritty issues of life because on my crabby and grumpy days, it's God's *chesed* that I hang on to. For better or for worse He's stuck with me no matter what.

An understanding of that Old Testament concept of *chesed* is what brings us into the New Testament to understand *agape* love, this totally committed, self-sacrificing kind of love or this amazing grace that God has for us in our lives. Once we understand more about what *chesed* is and who God is, then we grasp those concepts. They're more than just trivial things that we mention in our daily lives. The *chesed* of God.

So we're drawn in the psalm to reflect on that and to thank God for all the things He's done. Because of His covenant faithfulness, His covenant love, His *chesed* for us, and even do it with instruments as is mentioned there – the *ten-stringed lyre*. Not as many strings as John has on his guitar of twelve strings, but any of you musicians know that when you are playing an instrument you can get caught up in that instrument and just enjoy worshiping the Lord for long periods of time. That's what we're talking about this passage – being drawn into the worship, being drawn into the message.

Verse 4: *For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done.* In other words, I can see you at work.

I encourage families, as they're working together to build a spiritual relationship together so that they can grow spiritually together and they can pass the faith on to the next generation, that they would be asking this question regularly. I think it's a fair question. How did you see God work today?

I love asking children that question because they come up with such interesting answers. It's really fun to watch children grow spiritually and to see how they are seeing God at work. It's a testimony to all of us, because if we think we're just having our faith on Sunday morning and we see God work in a small group during the week, we're missing something very important. We need to take Jesus home to every area of our lives so we're seeing Him work in some very special ways. How did you see God working today?

It becomes so interesting to just imagine all of what God has created – that when I think of cinnamon, that God created cinnamon, now that is amazing. I love cinnamon. So just to think that God made that? That is so cool. And God made Mexican food that's spiced with cayenne pepper. Oh I really like that. And Indian food is different. It has curry in it. Wow, that's totally different. You know, God has made each one of these spices.

I think of flowers. Yesterday I was in Houston working on my teaching for today. I was leaving my hotel room and it was 54 degrees. That's how cold it gets in Houston. They said, "This is one of our coldest days." There were still flowers out, so there were pansies out there. I'm thinking, "These pansies are so beautiful." You don't usually see these in a winter, but you do in Houston. Then I think about mums and I think about orchids and I think about roses, and they're all so different. And I think, "Wow, God has made so many beautiful things."

I think about sunsets. Sometimes I see a beautiful sunset and I want to take a picture of it, but I know I can take a picture of it and it's nothing like the experience. When you watch a sunset, sometimes I'll just stop and watch the sun set because I know I can't bottle this up. I can't capture this moment. It's just magnificent.

God is at work in creation, but He's also at work in relationships. So many times relationships have challenges or dynamics and it's fun to watch how God connects those things. Good things happen in the midst of that. God is concerned about the details of our lives and we can see God work.

So in verse 4 it says, *You make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy for the works that you have done.* I'm reminded about the passage in Proverbs 30 where Agur writes, *"There are three things that are too amazing for me, four that I do not understand,"* and then we enter into the *Discovery Channel* of the Bible.

It says *the way of an eagle in the sky.* There was an eagle outside of our office just a few days ago. Dave says, "There's an eagle!" So he grabs the binoculars and goes outside to see this eagle. We have all kinds of eagles by our lake but not often do we get to see an eagle. There's just an amazing thing about an eagle flying in the sky.

The way of a snake on a rock. You may go, "Oh that's gross. I'm running away." But can you just imagine? How does a snake walk? How does a snake move? I don't even know how he slithers, but somehow he moves himself along. That is just simply amazing.

The way of a ship on the high seas. There are some principles of physics of some kind (I don't know what you call them), but a ship can be on the sea without sinking.

Or the way of a man with a young woman. It's so fun, isn't it, to watch two people in love. You go, "whoa, that relationship is really special." It touches us to watch something like that.

So this guy Agur who wrote part of the book of Proverbs is quoted here and mentions these four things. Those are amazing things.

Did you see God work today? I hope you do as you continue to live life and watch things happen. Amazing things will happen.

Look at verse 5. *How great are your works, Lord, how profound your thoughts!* Every Saturday morning they would get up, the morning sacrifice and they would be reminded to thank the Lord for all the things that He's done. God set up the plan. God designed all of this. It's deeper than we could ever imagine. It makes sense out of the daily grind of our lives because God is in control.

It's really fun to watch kids get it. One mom of a four year old said, "Every time at dinner my daughter prays for dinner. At four years old she prays the same prayer every day. 'Thank you for this day, thank you for this food. In Jesus' name, amen.'"

But the other day, we bowed our head to pray and I was getting ready for the typical response and she said, ‘Dear Jesus, thank you for the trees and for the flowers and for our house, and please help our family to do good. Amen.’” Now in that moment Mom says, “I was so touched by that prayer.” Why? Because Mom saw something happening in her daughter, where now this prayer, this container of a prayer that they had been using for some time was replaced with something that was coming from the heart. God was doing something in her four-year-old daughter.

It’s really exciting when our young people get it. When they start taking their spiritual life seriously and they start getting up in the morning and saying, “I’m thankful for what God has done”” or “Mom, would you pray for me about this.” It’s really fun when our young people catch it and they move forward.

Does everyone see life this way? No. And that’s why we go to verse 6. Does everyone get up in the morning with thankfulness on their hearts? Some people miss life. They miss what God wants to do and what God is doing.

Verse 6: Senseless people do not know, fools do not understand, that though the wicked spring up like grass and all evildoers flourish, they will be destroyed forever.

The human eye sees, but the human heart through faith has the ability to see many other things. God has given us spiritual glasses as believers so that as we’re looking around in life we see things different than other people see them. Because we know God is working. We see God at work and we’re excited to watch that happen in each of our lives.

The point here is that the fool is temporary. The fool is going to miss so much of what God has for us. It may appear at times that the foolish person (in this case it is referred to as the ignorant person) sometimes appears like they *flourish like grass*, it says, but they’re missing out on something very important. The senseless or ignorant person is the person who misses what God is doing around. They give little or no thought to the generosity of God. To be sure, they’ll enjoy the blessings of God, but they sense no responsibility to thank God for them. They spend all of their time and energy seeking their personal comfort or their pleasure, so they tend to even believe that they’re the ones who got themselves to the next level in the video game or something like that, and so they’re happy.

We can be very self-seeking in the things that we do. But the person who’s a believer understands that God is at work here and God is doing something very important.

Then we come to verse 8, the pinnacle of the psalm, the high point, with only one phrase so that we are disturbed by it to a certain point so it stands out in our minds. The statement is this: *But you, LORD, are forever exalted.*

You’re the one on Most High and you stay there. You’re the Lord of my life. I want to keep you there in my life. You’re at the high point. So we’re reminded of that one phrase that is so important before we come back down on the other side and we see the bad people again.

Verse 9: *For surely your enemies, Lord, surely your enemies will perish; all evildoers will be scattered.* God versus evil is described here.

Now in verses 10-15 we have the switch. We have the switch here to God's care for us and He cares for those who serve Him. He starts out with this illustration, two of them. One of them about the horn of the wild ox and the other is the fine oil.

Verse 10: *You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox.* It's the horns of the animal. If you ever watch the *Discovery Channel* then you see those horns that are there. They're the monument or the trophy of that person or that animal. So you like to look at those.

And then it talks about the *fine oils have been poured on me.* So there's a sense in which God has given us so much greatness. He's blessed us with so much.

The oil in the Old Testament was very important. First of all, it was very valuable. So in the story of Jesus when the woman came and put oil on His feet, that's a very important statement because it was very valuable. Myrrh was an oil that was given at Jesus's birth, but in the Old Testament it was used for anointing a king or used for first aid on a sheep that needed a cut fixed. It had a sweet smell. We have today's essential oils that have sweet smells, and that's what it was like, which was very pleasant in those days.

You have to realize, if you haven't been overseas you probably don't know what it's like to be with a bunch of people who don't use deodorant. We worshiped in a small confined area that was smaller than just these seats here with about a hundred people. Maybe not. Maybe fifty people just in this confined area with musicians and everything. Nobody had deodorant on in Kenya. My whole family was in there. One of my girls was sick, so sick she threw up right there. Everybody else kept dancing and going on, but we'd take her out to get some fresh air.

I'm telling you, this oil is really special. Don't miss it. Everybody wants the oil.

I think sometimes in our lives we feel like, "Lord, I need the oil. Give me the oil. I'm a quart low. Would you please help me out here today?" I think that's what God is saying here. He does that. He gives us oil that kind of drips down and there's a sweetness to it. I know it seems kind of greasy to us, but there's this sense in which it's sweet. It's special for them. So he's saying this is how God cares for us with the oil.

Verse 11: *My eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries; my ears have heard the rout of my wicked foes.*

I want you to see the experiential learning here. God is a multi-sensory God with appealing to us with a number of our senses here. He's got the feeling with the oil, He's got the eyes, the ears. We don't want to just come to God with our mind only. It's an experience that we have with God that He helps us to enjoy. The psalms draw that out for us, so it's a beautiful opportunity for us to study them. The understanding of God appeals to many senses is the idea here.

Verse 12: *The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God.*

We have this picture of the psalm all tied together. We're on the last section where we're seeing God's blessing and how He helps us understand. He gives us an illustration of two trees. He gives us the illustration of the palm tree and He gives us the illustration of the cedar.

Now if you're not familiar with those because you don't live in Jewish history or culture, then you miss the significance of those as applied to the person who is serving the Lord. If you're serving the Lord, you're like a palm tree. Well what does that mean?

A palm tree, especially the date palms were very commonly known in Jewish culture. So when you saw a date palm, you'd go, "Oh yes. Whoa. Look at that. That is magnificent." The palm tree is used as an analogy as someone who serves God. It doesn't just simply grow in the desert. It does that, but it flourishes. We can make it in the desert of our lives because we are like palm trees.

The Israelis say that the palm tree keeps its head in the fire and its roots in the spring. In the hot desert the palm trees flourish because they're able to be in the hot sun, but their roots go deep and they catch the water. They're tied into the spring that keeps them going so they can produce that beautiful fruit.

Many Christians are not flourishing because they're seeking nourishment in the surface. They're not going down. They send their roots out laterally. They're shallow. So when we dig our roots deeply into knowing God, who He is, and drawing on Him then we flourish like the palm tree.

This is a date palm tree and the dates have very sweet fruit. I eat dates. I've got them in my house. Instead of eating candy I'll eat a date. It's very sweet. Can't eat too many of them because they have a lot of calories in them. But they are an alternative to eating candy, so I enjoy them. Dates. A healthy date palm tree can produce 300 pounds of dates.

Another interesting thing about the palm tree (this is the coconut palm) is that they are very flexible and they can bend in the wind. So in a huge storm, the storms can go by and they don't break because of their flexibility.

Another interesting thing about date palm trees is that when they get older the dates become sweeter. That's helpful for us who are getting older. We're going to talk about those who are getting older here in the next verses, so it's tied all in here as we move forward.

But before we do, let's talk about the cedars. The cedar tree is mentioned 65 times in the Bible. The cedar is a very sturdy tree and it expands outwards. Many times it goes straight up, but it expands outwards many times forty feet wide. Very strong. The wood is very desirable because of its fragrance to keep away the insects. So we create cedar chests out of them or you put cedar blocks or pellets to put into a place to keep away moths and other things.

The cedars are huge and so they're mentioned over and over in the Bible as a descriptive picture for us to understand something (in this case to understand the person who serves the Lord is like a cedar tree). Strong. Strength is being mentioned there.

The pictures that we see in those two illustrations of the palm tree and the cedar tree are those of a fruitful strong life. The person who's serving the Lord can have that even in the midst of storms, even though problems are happening all around.

Look at verse 14. *They will still bear fruit in old age* (they don't have to retire. We don't retire these trees. *They still bear fruit in the old age, they will stay fresh and green* (those are great words for us that are getting older), *proclaiming, "The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."*

This idea of being *fresh and green* means they are full of sap. There's newness, there's the greenness about them. I would suggest that there are some people who retire – there's nothing wrong with retiring, but some people retire and then they just give up on life and then they're done. I would suggest the Christian never retires from being a Christian. We're always serving the Lord. We're always doing what God wants us to do. There's a freshness about that. Even when you get old there's freshness to that. The dates on the date palm get sweeter as the date tree or palm gets older. So that's a beautiful picture.

Notice it says *the Lord is upright; he is my Rock, there is no unrighteousness in him*. There's this ending to the psalm that draws us back to the character of God, who He is so that we can be thankful on the one side, we can rejoice in His blessings on the other side, we can say God is exalted in this world at the very top, and that becomes the beauty of this particular psalm as we see it.

When you're young you might choose to value friends and their opinions more than you would value God. As you get older or more mature even as a young person, you recognize the stability of God in your life and the necessary parts of our lives. We must come to the Lord and we must trust in Him and recognize who He is and rely on Him.

So that's Psalm 92, a beautiful passage that helps us draw into the presence of the Lord on a regular basis. Every morning, every night thanking the Lord, coming before Him, understanding who He is. He is true. He is the one who is working in our lives.

Let's stand and worship the Lord together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we do come before you now and thank you for your graciousness to us, your unfailing love. We ask that you would continue to do a work in our lives every day and we would be able to see it and we would thank you for it, we would be grateful people coming before you. Not just to express appreciation for your benefit, but for our own health and our own emotional strength as well. Lord, as we worship now we want you to be honored in our worship. Take the things we've heard now and read in your word and apply them to our hearts as we sing in worship to you. In Jesus' name, amen.