

SEEKING THE LORD'S BLESSING  
Psalm 147:10, 11

Intro: Psalm 147 is a Psalm which speaks of praising the Lord for His many blessings.

It begins and ends with a Hallelujah!

The first verse indicates why it is proper for us to praise the Lord--three reasons:

- 1) "It is good."
- 2) "It is pleasant."
- 3) "Praise is comely."

It is "good" because it is right that we should do so. God has richly blessed us; we owe Him praise. It is "pleasant" because it is spiritually profitable to us. And it is "comely" because it is what you would expect from the Lord's people.

Verses 4 and 5 speak of the greatness of the Lord--verse 4 giving us an illustration, and verse 5 a description--also in three ways. He knows the number of the stars, and has them all named. The Lord is great in three ways:

- 1) In His person.
- 2) In His power.
- 3) In his understanding.

The two words for "great" in verse 5 are different words in the original. The first, speaking of the Lord Himself, has to do with His position in the universe; there is none greater than He. The second speaks of manifold nature of His power. He is a God Who can do anything. And God's understanding is indefinable. It cannot be measured by its depth or length. It is inexhaustible. God will never run out of answers for us. But even this becomes a subject of praise.

There is an exhortation to "sing unto the Lord" in verse 7 with a suggestion as to the purpose, and also as the instrument that should be used.

We have another exhortation to "praise the Lord" in verse 12.

BUT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THESE STATEMENTS, THE REST OF THE PSALM IS DEVOTED TO MENTIONING SOME OF THE BLESSINGS WHICH THE HAS GIVEN TO HIS PEOPLE--WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TWO VERSES WHICH I HAVE SELECTED AS MY TEXT FOR TONIGHT.

(Read the blessings.)

What place, then, do verses 10 and 11 have in the Psalm?

This Psalm brings out a truth that was to be developed later by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1, and yet a truth which finds abundant illustrations all through the OT. Man is inclined to take pleasure in nature. He is inclined to be very self-centered. He is inclined to glory in his gifts, in his achievements. Paul stated the situation in this way in Rom. 1:25:

Who changed the truth of God into a lie,  
and worshipped and served the creature  
more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

This is not pleasing to the Lord. In fact, the Lord looks upon this as sin of the most serious kind. And so when we look at verse 10 we see:

I. THAT WHICH DOES NOT GIVE THE LORD PLEASURE (Psa. 147:10).

Some things please the Lord; other things do not. It is the major part of our responsibility toward God to please Him, and, if we are going to do that, we must know what it is that pleases Him, and what displeases Him.

Paul stated the purpose of His life in these words found in 2 Cor. 5:9:

Wherefore we labour (we make it our aim),  
that, whether present or absent,  
we may be accepted of him (well-pleasing to Him).

There can be no higher goal in life than that in ourselves and in our behavior we seek to please the Lord above everything else.

Two things are stated here in verse 10 as NOT giving the Lord pleasure.

A. "The strength of the horse."

B. "The legs of a man."

To understand these expressions we need to put ourselves in the OT setting in which the Psalmist was writing--and the writer may have been David.

These two statements point to one thing: They were very important in a time of war (which always had to be a time of great danger and emergency). Horses carried warriors into battle, and often a battle was decided on the basis of what side had the most horses and the best horses. You will remember how Solomon multiplied his horses in order to strengthen his army.

But then battles were often fought and won by the foot

soldiers. Their strength, their agility and ability, was often the deciding factor in winning a war.

Now the Psalmist was not saying that that horses and soldiers were unimportant. But they became a hindrance rather than a blessing if the people were trusting in their horses and in their soldiers rather than trusting in the Lord.

King David wrote in Psalm 20:7,  
Some trust in chariots, and some in horses:  
but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

The Lord often sent His people into war, but it grieved Him is they were trusting in themselves, or in their horses, instead of trusting in Him!

We need to remember Who the Lord is. We need to remember what He has done--and what He continues to do. And then to realize that our glory should be in Who He is, not in who we are, nor in the weapons of warfare that we might have. Armies are necessary in this world, but not as a substitute for the Lord. They are only useful, as great as they may be, if the Lord chooses to use them as His instruments.

But now let us look at the positive side which we have already been discussing:

## II. THAT WHICH DOES GIVE THE LORD PLEASURE (Psa. 147:11).

That which pleases Him, that of which He approves, that which brings His blessing, is clearly stated here.

(Read.)

Listing all of the blessings of God, all of the works of God, in this Psalm, were being used by Him to show how we can seek and find the Lord's blessing. And this verse tells us that there are two things that are important, two things which go hand in hand (so to speak). If you are doing one in the right way, you will be doing the other. In that way these statements are parallel to each other. But the Psalmist "spells it out" very carefully for us so we will see the two basic things that please the Lord. And when the Lord is pleased, His greatest and best blessings follow.

What are they?

A. Obedience to the Lord.

## B. Faith in the Lord.

As I mentioned when we were considering the Beatitudes in the Psalms, the fear of the Lord is one of the most important statements that we have in the OT and in the NT (because you will find it all through the Bible). It means that we are fearful of the consequences of displeasing the Lord, but it is a term which does not speak of living in fear of what the Lord may do to us next. It means that we are fearful that we may fail to please the Lord. The person who fears the Lord hates what the Lord hates, and loves what the Lord loves. We have been learning in the study of Jeremiah's prophecy that the basic problem with the people of Israel and the people of Judah was that they did not fear the Lord. And, when the Lord fulfills the new covenant with them, one thing He said that He will do is this (found in Jer. 32:40):

... but I will put my fear in their hearts,  
that they shall not depart from me.

The person who fears the Lord obeys the Lord, not just because he is fearful of the consequences of disobedience, but, more positively, because he loves the Lord and wants to please Him in every way possible.

When David had sinned so grievously with Bathsheba, and then killed her husband, he knew that there was no sacrifice that he could bring to atone for his sin. He said so in Psa. 51:16, 17:

For thou desirest not sacrifice;  
else would I give it:  
**thou delightest not in burnt offering.**  
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:  
a broken and a contrite heart, O God,  
thou wilt not despise.

There was no offering that could please the Lord for what David had done. He needed to get right in his heart before he could possibly do anything or bring anything that would please the Lord.

What about faith? The Psalmist said that "the Lord taketh pleasure ... in those that hope in his mercy."

It is not many men, nor many horses, that will give us peace and assure us of the Lord's blessing. It is much faith--hoping in the mercy of the Lord, trusting Him, not trusting in our army, nor in the armies of other nations, nor in their cavalry nor horse-drawn chariots.

Concl: Let these two verses teach us two very important and

very precious truths:

- 1) The Lord wants us to please Him.
- 2) The Lord wants us to trust Him.

How do we please Him? By doing what the Lord tells us to do in His Word. How do we trust Him? By doing what David told himself to do in Psa. 62:5:

My soul, wait thou only upon God;  
for my expectation is from him.

When we are obeying the Lord, then we trust Him to help us with His blessings. As Solomon said in the words recorded for us in Proverbs 16:7,

When a man's ways please the Lord,  
he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

May this be a week when we will see the blessing of the Lord in special ways upon our lives. Let us trust Him to make us obedient to His Word, and to trust Him whatever trials we may be facing. This is what really please Him and causes Him to delight in us. Our Lord on earth is our Perfect Example of One Who pleases the Lord on both counts.