

# Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School  
Placerita Baptist Church  
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by

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## Psalm 92 — Sabbath Song

### 1.0 Introducing Psalm 92

- When we think of the Old Testament Sabbath, we too often think of Jewish restrictions concerning its observance—like not traveling more than a mile (cp. Acts 1:12). It was, however, observed as a day of worshiping the Lord (Numbers 28:9-10; Deuteronomy 5:15; Ezekiel 46:3; cp. Luke 4:16-21; Acts 13:14-15, 27; 15:21; 16:13). However, Psalm 92 is the clearest example of the worship that characterized the Sabbath.
- For each day of the week one psalm was assigned for the morning worship in the post-exilic Temple:

▪ <i>Sunday:</i>	Psalm 24	▪ <i>Thursday:</i>	Psalm 81
▪ <i>Monday:</i>	Psalm 48	▪ <i>Friday:</i>	Psalm 93
▪ <i>Tuesday:</i>	Psalm 82	▪ <i>Saturday:</i>	Psalm 92
▪ <i>Wednesday:</i>	Psalm 94		
- Psalm 92 presents the answer to the prayer in 90:14-16.

### 2.0 Reading Psalm 92 (NAU)

**92:1** A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath day.

It is good to give thanks to the (LORD)

And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

**92:2** To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning  
And Your faithfulness by night,

**92:3** With the ten-stringed lute and with the harp,  
With resounding music upon the lyre.

**92:4** For You, O (LORD), have made me glad by what You have done,  
I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands.

**92:5** How great are Your works, O (LORD)!  
Your thoughts are very deep.

- 92:6** A senseless man has no knowledge,  
Nor does a stupid man understand this:
- 92:7** That when the wicked **sprouted** up like grass  
And all who did iniquity **flourished**,  
It *was only* that they might be destroyed forevermore.
- 92:8** But You, O **LORD**, are on high forever.
- 92:9** For, behold, Your enemies, O **LORD**,  
For, behold, Your enemies will perish;  
All who do iniquity will be scattered.
- 92:10** But You have exalted my horn like *that of* the wild ox;  
I have been anointed with fresh oil.
- 92:11** And my eye has looked *exultantly* upon my foes,  
My ears hear of the evildoers who rise up against me.
- 92:12** The righteous man will **flourish** like the palm tree,  
He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
- 92:13** Planted in the house of the **LORD**,  
They will **flourish** in the courts of our God.
- 92:14** They will still yield fruit in old age;  
They shall be full of sap and very green,
- 92:15** To declare that the **LORD** is upright;  
*He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.*

### 3.0 Understanding Psalm 92

#### 3.1 Outline

- I. The Sounds of Praise (vv. 1-3)
- II. The Show of Power (vv. 4-9)
- III. The Satisfaction of Protection (vv. 10-15)



#### 3.2 Notes

- **v. 1** “A Psalm, a Song”
  - “Psalm” is the noun derived from the same root word as the verb “to sing praises.” These terms refer to playing instruments (primarily stringed instruments) and singing to instrumental accompaniment.
  - See the references to the “ten-stringed lute,” the “harp,” and the “lyre” in verse 3. These are most likely three different kinds of lyre.
    - ✓ “Resounding music” (*higgaion*) occurs here and in Psalm 9:16 of music. The same Hebrew word is translated “meditation” in 19:14.
  - See notes on Psalm 33:2-3 regarding music and worship (posted on the web site at [www.drbarrick.org/sermons.html#lessons](http://www.drbarrick.org/sermons.html#lessons)).
  - Singing accompanied by stringed instruments was a part of Sabbath worship in the Temple.
  - *Since God accepted such musical praise on the Sabbath, what effects might this have upon how Christians observe the Lord’s Day now?*

- **v. 1** “for the Sabbath day”
  - In the New Testament we learn that the day of worship is now the first day of the week rather than the seventh day. Rather than commemorating God’s creation of the earth, the first day commemorates the resurrection of Jesus.
    - ✓ Acts 20:7 (meeting for Lord’s supper and preaching)
    - ✓ 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (church offerings on the first day)
    - ✓ Revelation 1:10 (called “the Lord’s day”)
  - Compare Leviticus 23:10-11 (first fruits on the day after the Sabbath) with 1 Corinthians 15:20.
  - With regard to observing the Sabbath as a Christian and how to observe the Lord’s day, see Colossians 2:16-17 and Romans 14:5-6.
  - *Is the Lord’s day the Christian Sabbath? What are your reasons?*
- **v. 2** Chiasm
  - A To declare
  - B in the morning
  - C Your lovingkindness
  - C’ And Your faithfulness
  - B’ by night,
  - These are the same two prominent truths about God that we saw emphasized in Psalm 89. God is steadfastly loyal in His love to His people and faithful to His Word. These are fitting topics of praise.
- **v. 4** Chiasm
  - A For You, O LORD, have made me glad
  - B by what You have done,
  - B’ at the works of Your hands.
  - A I will sing for joy
  - Praising the Lord is remembering God’s wonderful deeds in delivering His people from their enemies (cf. verses 9-11) and declaring His works in creation and throughout history.
  - “Sing for joy” is a ringing shout that expresses rejoicing at the birth of a child (Isaiah 54:1), seeing a miracle (Leviticus 9:24), triumph in war (Zephaniah 3:14-17), salvation resulting in God’s presence among His people (Isaiah 12:2-6), and resurrection (Isaiah 26:19).
- **v. 6** “A senseless man . . . a stupid man”
  - “A senseless man” literally means “a beastly man” or “a brute,” someone who is dull and unresponsive to God (see Psalm 73:22). He is one who “hates reproof” (Proverbs 12:1).
  - “A stupid man” is a common word for “fool” in the Old Testament (see Proverbs 10:1; 18:2, 7; 26:11; 28:26; Ecclesiastes 7:4). This word is used only in Proverbs (49x), Ecclesiastes (18x), and Psalms (3x).
  - Both words are used together in Psalms 49:10 and 94:8.

- **v. 8** “But You”
  - The contrast is dramatic and is further emphasized by being a monocolon (a single line of poetry instead of two or three lines in normal parallelism) possibly connected to the third line of verse 7.
- **v. 10** “my horn”
  - The horn is a symbol of power (1 Samuel 2:1; Psalms 18:2; 89:17). “Exalt the horn” refers to prosperity.
  - See notes on Psalm 75:4.
- **v. 10** “anointed with fresh oil”
  - Here the oil signifies divine care and provision.
- **v. 11** Focus on Foes
  - A chiasm in this verse centers on the terms for the enemies.
- **vv. 12-14** Wisdom Metaphor
  - While the wicked are like “grass” and “flourished” briefly before being destroyed (verse 7), the righteous “flourish like the palm tree” (a symbol of grace and fruitfulness) and “grow like a cedar in Lebanon” (a symbol of power and majesty).
  - The righteous are like the trees in the Temple (cp. Psalms 52:8; 84:10; Isaiah 60:13).
  - The chiasm of verse 13 focuses on the Temple.
  - Even in old age the righteous are still vigorous and fruitful. Palms can be as much as 200 years old and the cedars up to 3000 years old.
  - Cp. 2 Corinthians 4:16–5:9.
- **v. 13** “Planted”
  - Only here and in Psalm 1:3 does the word for “transplanted” occur. The picture occurs also in Psalm 80:8-11.
  - “The historical casting of Israel’s ‘cultivation’ elicits a new understanding of the Psalter’s opening psalm, as well as its offshoots, Psalms 52 and 92. The righteous individual ‘transplanted’ on Zion’s soil is paralleled with Israel’s historical passage from bondage to deliverance and, ultimately, its constitution in the land.”—William P. Brown, *Seeing the Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 77-78.
- **v. 15** “To declare”
  - This forms an inclusio with verse 2 to bracket the psalm.
- **v. 15** “my rock”
  - Cp. Deuteronomy 32:4.
  - See also Psalms 18:2, 46; 19:14.





#### 4.0 Singing Psalm 92

##### Sweet Is the Work, My God, My King

(Tunes: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” or “He Leadeth Me” or “Sweet Hour of Prayer” or “And Can It Be That I Should Gain?”)

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| <p>1 Sweet is the work, my God, my King,<br/>To praise thy name, give thanks and<br/>sing,<br/>To show thy love by morning light,<br/>And talk of all thy truth at night.</p> <p>3 My heart shall triumph in my Lord,<br/>And bless his works, and bless his word;<br/>Thy works of grace, how bright they<br/>shine!<br/>How deep thy counsels! how divine!</p> <p>5 But I shall share a glorious part<br/>When grace hath well refined my heart;<br/>And fresh supplies of joy are shed,<br/>Like holy oil, to cheer my head.</p> <p>7 Then shall I see, and hear, and know<br/>All I desired or wished below;<br/>And every power find sweet employ<br/>In that eternal world of joy.</p> | <p>2 Sweet is the day of sacred rest,<br/>No mortal cares shall seize my breast;<br/>O may my heart in tune be found,<br/>Like David's harp of solemn sound!</p> <p>4 Fools never raise their thoughts so high;<br/>Like brutes they live, like brutes they<br/>die;<br/>Like grass they flourish, till thy breath<br/>Blast them in everlasting death.</p> <p>6 Sin (my worst enemy before)<br/>Shall vex my eyes and ears no more;<br/>My inward foes shall all be slain,<br/>Nor Satan break my peace again.</p> <p>[Repeat verse 1 if using “He Leadeth Me” or<br/>“Sweet Hour of Prayer” or “And Can It Be That I<br/>Should Gain?”]</p> |
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— Isaac Watts

#### 5.0 Praying Psalm 92

- Lord, thank You for being steadfastly loving and faithful to me. [vv. 1-2]
- O God, I shout for joy because of all You have done for me. [v. 4]
- Keep me from being insensitive and dull about spiritual things. [v. 6]
- Father, give me the privilege of serving You even in my old age. [v. 14]
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#### 6.0 Applying Psalm 92

- We need to join with other believers in corporate praise on the Lord's day (Hebrews 10:25).
- Wicked people flourish temporarily; the righteous flourish even in old age.
- The Lord should be the focus of our praise—let Him be exalted.

*How do you approach Sundays?* Do you think of it as a day in which you have to go to church, but the duties of which you try to get over as soon as possible so you can spend the rest of the time with your family or get on to other more enjoyable things? Or do you think of it as a precious day given to you by God in which you can learn about him and so praise him? Is Sunday a trial or a treat? Is it a delight or a deadly duty?

— James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 2:754