

Triennial Torah Study – 1st Year 15/01/2011



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By Joseph F. Dumond

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<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

Gen 46	2 Sam 20-21	Ps 90-92	Luke 8:49 – 9:50
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Gen 46

Once again I find it very interesting how the Torah reading coincides with the main article of the Newsletter. Above I have been talking about the Famine of Abraham and the current world conditions that are forming and shaping a famine in our time. Each week I write the main article and then add the Torah Study afterwards not knowing what we are going to be looking at.

The famine of Abraham's day was so severe it drove him into the land of Egypt, just as the later famine had done in the days of his descendants Jacob and Joseph. The fact that both famines had driven the Hebrews, as fugitives or sojourners into the Egyptians for help weighs on my mind. Is this the part of the prophecy we are missing? Is this current food shortage going to drive Israel, The USA and UK nations to Babylon, to the European Nations for food and aid? Something to watch for.

This week we are given the list of the 70 people who went down to Egypt. And with a casual read this might be all you get from this. So now let me share an article that is going to bring out some controversial discussions. Not that I avoid controversies. I do not say this article is true or not true. But I do find it amazing to read. So you decide.

Jacob's Seventieth Descendant by John P. Pratt
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Applying strict logic to an account in Genesis leads to discovering a startling hidden treasure in the scriptures. Our science editor gives the answer to the scriptural puzzle presented last month.

In last month's article, "Hidden Treasures in the Scriptures" we looked at what appears to be a first class logic puzzle in the Book of Genesis (Gen. 46:5-27). At first the problem looks like a

simple mistake: the record implies that Jacob had seventy descendants when he arrived in Egypt, and yet only sixty-nine appear to be listed. Now let's look at the solution, which indeed has been a hidden treasure in the scriptures. The answer is important because it is strong evidence from the Bible of a Jewish tradition that has been thought by scholars to be merely a fanciful fabrication. Not only does it add to our knowledge of Biblical history, but the solution likely affects your genealogy because Jacob's seventieth descendant is likely to be your own ancestor!

The problem, which is given in full in last month's article, arises from the following two apparent inconsistencies in the Biblical record. Jacob had four wives, and the number of descendants of each is given along with a list of their names. The first problem is that it claims Leah had 33 living descendants, but only 32 names are listed with her. Secondly, it makes a big point that 66 descendants made the trip to Egypt with Jacob, and that Joseph and his two sons were already there, for a total of seventy.

Both statements seem to be missing somebody, so the question arises whether it is possible to reconcile all the statements.

Most modern scholars assume that Moses wrote the Book of Genesis himself, or that it was written down centuries after Moses from oral traditions. Thus, they tend to overlook human "errors" and usually don't even mention this problem at all. On the other hand, ancient Jewish commentators studied every word of Genesis because they understood that the entire book was given as a revelation from God to Moses. Therefore, any apparent inconsistency demanded a real explanation. Although it does not appear that they deduced the correct solution, it is instructive to review the solutions which they offered.[1]

1. Ancient Solutions

One solution given by Jewish commentators near the time of Christ was that Jacob is to be counted with the 69 to bring the total to 70. This is also the usual solution given by modern Bible commentators, if they mention the problem at all. That solution will not work, however, because the numbers of descendants given for each of the four wives do indeed add up to seventy (Leah 33, Zilpah 16, Rachel 14, Bilhah 7), so clearly it was not the author's intent to include Jacob himself in the count. Other solutions were that another son of Dan, or that Asher's daughter Serah, or even that the Holy One of Israel would complete the count. The best ancient solution was probably deduced as follows. First, Leah had 33 descendants but only 32 are listed as making the trip, so the missing descendant must be from Leah. Second, 66 made the trip, 3 were already in Egypt, and yet the total in Egypt when Jacob arrived in Egypt was 70. Therefore, one might have been born just as they crossed the border into Egypt. The proposed person was Jochebed, the mother of Moses, who was Levi's daughter and Leah's granddaughter (Exo. 2:1, 6:16-20).

That answer should technically be disqualified on at least two counts. First, the puzzle states that Jacob took with him all of his sons' daughters, so that should include her, even if carried

in the womb. Secondly, the Bible specifically states that Jochebed was born to Levi after he arrived in Egypt (Num. 26:59). That did not stop the commentator from inventing this detailed description of her birth, which is clearly a tailor-made solution to our problem:

Such was the manner of Jacob's arrival in Egypt. He came with his whole family, sixty-nine persons they were in all, but the number was raised to seventy by the birth of Jochebed, afterward the mother of Moses, which took place when the cavalcade had advanced to the space between the one and the other city wall.[2]

Why should Jochebed, rather than any other unnamed infant, be chosen for this very clever solution to the problem? She was a particularly good candidate because she was said to be very old at the time of Moses' birth. There is a tradition of uncertain origin that she was 130 years old at his birth.[3] That's forty years older than Sarah at the birth of Isaac! In any case, if she were 130, and if Moses was 80 when he delivered Israel from bondage (Exo. 7:7) then the total stay in Egypt would have been 210 years (if she had been born as they entered). That is close to the traditional 215 years for the stay in Egypt.[4] When the apocryphal Book of Jasher was compiled from Jewish traditions, this commentary had become so well accepted that Jasher explicitly states that Jochebed "was born unto them in their going down to Egypt" (Jasher 59:9), a rare example of actually changing the Biblical record that she was born after they arrived in Egypt. Moreover, the length of the sojourn in Egypt according to that book was cut from 215 years down to 210 years (Jasher 81:3, compare Ex. 12:40), apparently just to fit this very solution to this puzzle.

2. The Solution

Now let us turn to what I propose is the real solution, which does not require any additional information or Biblical background to see, but which can be deduced only from the information given in the "puzzle" itself. In other words, it could be deduced if all the names were changed to fictitious names, so that the puzzle could be solved independent of the rest of Biblical history.

1. We are told 66 descendants made the trip to Egypt, that Joseph and his two sons were already in Egypt, but that the total number in the House of Jacob on arrival was 70. The first possibility is that Jacob is the 70th person.
2. Jacob cannot be the 70th person because the totals for each of the four wives adds up to 70, so Jacob is not included in the count.
3. The person must be Leah's descendant because she had 33 and only 32 are listed with her name.
4. Because only 66 made the trip, the 70th person must have been in Egypt already (or perhaps born at the moment they crossed the Egyptian border!?).
5. Except for Joseph and his two sons, Jacob brought with him all his sons and his sons' sons and his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and also all of his great-grandchildren. At

first, this wording might sound like a verbose way to state that Jacob brought all of his descendants with him except for Joseph and his two sons. But closer inspection shows that the list fails to include his daughters' children. Jacob only had one daughter, so the missing descendant must have been his daughter Dinah's child. There are many such examples in the scriptures where it looks like the Lord is going on with needless detail, when actually great truths are hidden in what is not said. Every word which proceeds forth from his mouth is carefully chosen.

6. Now for the surprise. The Bible states, "These are the names of the children of Israel,"(Gen. 46:8), and there are indeed 70 names which follow. The seventieth name, which appears to be extra, is that of Asenath, the wife of Joseph. Her name is given in the verse about those who were already in Egypt, so that brings the total names to four of those who didn't make the trip.

7. But wait. Weren't we explicitly told that none of the wives of the twelve sons of Jacob were included in the count? So isn't Joseph's wife Asenath disqualified because of that? It is this point which convinced me that these verses qualify as a truly classic logic puzzle. The best puzzles have misleading clues, designed to make the puzzle difficult, such as we saw in point 5 above in the way the list of those making the trip was worded. A careful reading shows that the puzzle stated that none of the wives is included in the count of the 66 who made the trip

(Gen. 46:26). So all of the wives but one are disallowed! The wording expressly allows Asenath to be the seventieth descendant. Such misleading and yet technically correct statements are the bread and butter of logic puzzles.

8. Thus, the solution to the puzzle is that Joseph's wife Asenath is the seventieth descendant of Jacob, being the daughter of Dinah.

Now let's look at Hebrew and Christian traditions which support this conclusion.

3. The Hebrew Tradition

But could Asenath really have been Dinah's daughter? To the best of my knowledge, this solution to the puzzle has never been published until now. No one has noticed that these verses in an obscure list of genealogy imply that Joseph's wife, the mother of the tribe who inherited the blessing of the firstborn of Israel, is also of the house of Israel. Could that really be true?

It turns out that it has long been a Jewish tradition that Asenath was the daughter of Leah's daughter Dinah by Shechem, a prince in the land of Canaan (Gen. 34:2). It has been thought by scholars that this tradition was no more than a fabrication. It was supposedly invented to explain the otherwise embarrassing fact that Joseph married an Egyptian woman, when Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all given strict commands to marry in their own family lineage.

It has always seemed strange to me, however, that a legend was invented to legitimize Joseph's wife's lineage by making her the illegitimate daughter of Dinah and someone from Canaan. Here is one of the many variations of this tradition:

Dinah was already pregnant by Shechem, and bore him a posthumous daughter. Her brothers wished to kill the child, as custom demanded, lest any Canaanite might say 'The maidens of Israel are without shame!' Jacob, however, restrained them, hung about his grand-daughter's neck a silver disk on which were engraved the words 'Holy to God!', and laid her underneath a thorn bush — hence she was called 'Asenath'. That same day Michael, in the shape of an eagle, flew off with Asenath to On in Egypt, and there laid her beside God's altar. The priest, by name Potipherah, seeing his wife was barren, brought up Asenath as his own child.

Many years later, when Joseph had saved Egypt from famine and made a progress through the land, women threw him thank-offerings. Among them was Asenath who, having no other gift, tossed Joseph her silver disk, which he caught as it flew by. He recognized the inscription and, knowing she must be his own niece, married her.[5]

In a less miraculous version of this tradition, Jacob himself placed the infant Asenath near the wall of Egypt. On the same day Potiphar was taking a walk, accompanied by his retinue, and approached the wall. He heard the child weeping and commanded his followers to bring it to him. When he noticed the tablet and read the inscription he said to his followers, "This child is the daughter of eminent people. Carry it into my house and procure a nurse for it.

[6]

It is clear from how different these two traditions are that much of these stories are the interpolations of men. All of these legends agree, however, on the core idea that Asenath was the daughter of Dinah and Shechem. The uncertainty seems to be on just how she came to arrive in Egypt and to be adopted by Potipherah.

Another clue is that Joseph is tied to Shechem is that Joseph was buried at Shechem (Joshua 24:32). Why was he buried there, when Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried together in Hebron? Shechem later became part of the inheritance of the tribe of Manasseh, Joseph's son.

Now let us turn to early Christian traditions about Joseph and Asenath.

4. The Christian Tradition

A rather different story is told in the apocryphal book Joseph and Asenath, which was a highly respected book of early Christianity.[7] A principal theme is Asenath's total conversion to Joseph's religion, facilitated by the appearance of an angel who looked like Joseph (J&A 14:9).

While this book says nothing about Asenath not being the literal daughter of Potipherah, it has many clues that the author knew her true lineage, but also wanted to keep it a secret.

Remember, that during past ages, it was a huge disgrace to have been an illegitimate child, so

the motive for keeping her lineage secret is obvious. Here are some clues that the author of Joseph and Asenath knew who Asenath really was.

1. The point is made that Asenath does not look anything like other Egyptian women, but that she was “slender like unto Sarah, beautiful like Rebekah, and radiant in appearance like Rachel.”[8] Stating that she looked exactly like the three wives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all of whom were from Abraham’s family, has a pretty clear implications about her true lineage, without giving details.
2. The author gives the ages of both Asenath and Joseph’s brother Benjamin correctly, as being 18 years old at the time when Joseph was 30 (J&A 1:4, 27:2). That matches the Hebrew tradition perfectly,[9] although that information is not in the Old Testament.
3. Asenath goes into a soliloquy where she states that she is “an orphan, and desolate and abandoned and hated” (J&A 11:3). Such a surprising declaration is justified by explaining that she means only that she expects to be rejected by her Egyptian parents when she denounces their gods. The evidence that she really was a rejected orphan makes it much more understandable that such an unusual statement would be included.
4. The story speaks of Asenath’s “foster father.” He does not appear to be Potipherah, but rather a steward (J&A 18:2), but it is interesting that the story includes her foster father.

Thus, there are many clues that the author of the Joseph and Asenath knew who she really was. Much of the rest of the book appears to be interpolation and fabrication, or what we might call today a “historical novel.” The great success of recent historical novels seems to be that they are set in a true historical setting. Similarly, it appears that the author of Joseph and Asenath wrote the account to be consistent with all of the historical setting of which he was aware.

5. Conclusion

If it is acknowledged that there really is a true logic puzzle purposely included in Genesis 46, then it is an important discovery because it elevates the tradition of Asenath’s true lineage from being a mere fabrication to being indicated by scripture. But one cannot prove that the logic puzzle was in the mind of the author of Genesis. It could be argued that the puzzle is not there at all, that it is rather just a coincidence that two errors just happen to indicate that Asenath is of the House of Israel. Anyone taking that position, however, should explain why Asenath’s name is in the genealogy list at all, especially in light of the explicit statement that none of the wives is included in the count. This point and all of the other unusual wording can best be explained by recognizing that Genesis does indeed contain all the information necessary to deduce that Asenath, the mother of the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, was the daughter of Dinah of the house of Israel.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. Neusner, Jacob, Genesis Rabbah, The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis, A New American Translation (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1985). Vol III, pp. 319-324.
2. Ginzberg, Louis, The Legends of the Jews, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1948), vol II, p. 122.
3. For example see The Book of Jasher (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Artisan Sales, 1988), which implies that Jochebed was 130 at Moses birth (Jasher 59:9, 68:2, 68:11, 73:1-2).
4. The 430 years mentioned in Exo. 12:40 was interpreted to be 215 years from Abraham's entering Canaan until Israel entered Egypt, followed by another 215 years in Egypt. See the Jewish historian Josephus in Antiquities, XIV.xv.2.
5. Graves, Robert & Patai, Raphael, Hebrew Myths (New York: Greenwich House, 1964), p. 237. See also Ginzberg, op. cit., II: 38.
6. V. Aptowitzer, "Asenath, the Wife of Joseph," Hebrew Union College Annual (New York: Ktav Publishing, 1924), Vol. I, pp. 239-255.
7. Burchard, C., "Joseph and Asenath," in Charlesworth, James H., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 195 states, "Joseph and Asenath is one of the best attested and most widely distributed books included in this collection."
8. Joseph and Asenath 1:8, translation from Ginzberg, op. cit., II:170.
9. For example, Jubilees 30:2 says Dinah was 12 at the time of her union with Shechem. Joseph and Dinah were the same age, which would make Joseph about twelve years older than Asenath, so Asenath being 18 when Joseph was 30 makes sense. And Benjamin was born at Bethlehem shortly after the incident at Shechem, as the family traveled to Hebron (Gen. 35:18).

At the end of Chapter 46 we are told that to the Egyptians every shepherd is an Abomination. Why?

Every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians comes to mean more to those who know the Word Yehovah, for in Zechariah it says that Yehshua describes Himself as a shepherd to the people (Zechariah 13), and in John it says that Yehshua described Himself as the good shepherd to the house of Israel (John 10). He is the shepherd (1 Peter 2), yes He is the chief shepherd (1 Peter 5), and to the Egyptians (the world) He is an abomination to this very day.

Again why?

What did Joseph really mean when he said that “every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians?”

We read in the next chapter about Pharaoh telling Joseph to make them chief herdsmen over Pharaoh’s flocks in verse 6 so what is being said here?

From Clarke’s commentary we get the following.

Thy servants trade hath been about cattle – “The land of Goshen, called also the land of Rameses, lay east of the Nile, by which it was never overflowed, and was bounded by the mountains of the baid on the south, by the Nile and Mediterranean on the west and north, and by the Red Sea and desert of Arabia on the east. It was the Heliopolitan nome or district, and its capital was called On. Its proper name was Geshen, the country of grass or pasturage, or of the shepherds, in opposition to the rest of the land which was sown after having been overflowed by the Nile.” – Bruce. As this land was both fruitful and pleasant, Joseph wished to fix his family in that part of Egypt; hence he advises them to tell Pharaoh that their trade had been in cattle from their youth: and because every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians, hence he concluded that there would be less difficulty to get them quiet settlement in Goshen, as they would then be separated from the Egyptians, and consequently have the free use of all their religious customs. This scheme succeeded, and the consequence was the preservation both of their religion and their lives, though some of their posterity did afterwards corrupt themselves; see Ezekiel 20:8; Amos 5:26. As it is well known that the Egyptians had cattle and flocks themselves, and that Pharaoh even requested that some of Joseph’s brethren should be made rulers over his cattle, how could it be said, as in Genesis 46:34, Every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians? Three reasons may be assigned for this:

1. Shepherds and feeders of cattle were usually a sort of lawless, free-booting bandits, frequently making inroads on villages, etc., carrying off cattle, and whatever spoils they could find. This might probably have been the case formerly, for it is well known it has often been the case since. On this account such persons must have been universally detested.
2. They must have abhorred shepherds if Manetho’s account of the Hyksos or king-shepherds can be credited. Hordes of marauders under this name, from Arabia, Syria, and Ethiopia, (whose chief occupation, like the Bedouin Arabs of the present day, was to keep flocks), made a powerful irruption into Egypt, which they subdued and ruled with great tyranny for 259 years. Now, though they had been expelled from that land some considerable time before this, yet their name, and all persons of a similar occupation, were execrated by the Egyptians, on account of the depredations and long-continued ravages they had committed in the country.
3. The last and probably the best reason why the Egyptians abhorred such shepherds as the Israelites were, was, they sacrificed those very animals, the ox particularly, and the Sheep,

which the Egyptians held sacred. Hence the Roman historian Tacitus, speaking of the Jews, says: "Caeso Ariete velut in contumelia Ammonis; Bos quoque immolatur, quem Aegyptii Apim colunt." "They sacrifice the ram in order to insult Jupiter Ammon, and they sacrifice the ox, which the Egyptians worship under the name of Apis." Though some contend that this idolatry was not as yet established in Egypt, and that the king-shepherds were either after the time of Joseph, or that Manetho by them intends the Israelites themselves; yet, as the arguments by which these conjectures are supported are not sufficient to overthrow those which are brought for the support of the contrary opinions, and as there was evidently an established religion and priesthood in Egypt before Joseph's time, (for we find the priests had a certain portion of the land of Egypt which was held so sacred that Joseph did not attempt to buy it in the time of the famine, when he bought all the land which belonged to the people, Genesis 47:20-22), and as that established priesthood was in all likelihood idolatrous, and as the worship of Apis under the form of an ox was one of the most ancient forms of worship in Egypt, we may rest tolerably certain that it was chiefly on this account that the shepherds, or those who fed on and sacrificed these objects of their worship, were an abomination to the Egyptians. Calmet has entered into this subject at large, and to his notes I must refer those readers who wish for farther information. See Clarke on Genesis 43:32 (note).

2 Sam 20-21

I have found a Jewish site with some good insights and will use them today and maybe in the future. But they do have some Talmudic myths which I do not always agree with. But I wanted to include some of them like the one about this wise women so you too have an idea of what the Talmud does teach. It has some great insights and some questionable ones. The main URL is <http://www.azamra.org/NaCh.shtml>

I ended up at this site while looking for an answer to the question for chapter 21 about why David would allow seven of Saul's descendants to be hung for six months on a tree which breaks the commandment not to leave a body on a tree overnight.

I have told you to read your Torah and when you have a question to look for an answer. This is what I do when I read something that does not at first make sense. Here is the results of that search.

<http://www.azamra.org/Bible/II%20Samuel%2019-20.htm>

CHAPTER 20

"And all the men of Israel went up from going after David and went after Sheva ben Bichri" (v 2). Although the rebellion of Sheva ben Bichri, who was a relative of King Saul, takes up far less of the narrative than that of Absalom, David considered it to be potentially far more serious (v 6).

There is some evidence of cracks in the unity of David's supporters. Having sent his new candidate for commander-in-chief, Amasa, to muster the tribe of Judah, David soon

discovered that Amasa had no intention of rushing into action because he failed to bring troops within the three day time-limit he had been given. David immediately dispatched Joab's brother Avishai against Sheva ben Bichri. Joab saw this as a further step towards his own displacement and personally went out with the troops after the rebels, intending to take matters into his own hands. Meeting the unsuspecting Amasa on the way, Joab once again demonstrated his "trigger-happy" attitudes and killed him in vengeance for his having supported Absalom and in order to secure his own position.

With David's men in pursuit, Sheva ben Bichri advanced towards the north of Israel, arousing all the tribes against David as he went. The town of Aveil Beis Ma'achah where Joab caught up with him (v 14) is near the northern border of present-day Israel between Metulla and Kfar Giladi, while the "Beirim" whom he recruited to his cause (ibid.) are thought to have lived in the town of Biryiah immediately north of Safed.

THE WISE WOMAN OF AVEIL BEIS MA'ACHAH

Once again a mysterious wise woman suddenly appeared just in time to save Israel from needless bloodshed by calling to Joab from the walls of Aveil Beis Ma'achah as he laid siege to the town in order to capture Sheva ben Bichri. The sages identified this wise woman with Serah, daughter of Asher the son of Jacob, who is credited with having sung to Jacob that Joseph was still alive and with having helped Moses discover where Joseph's coffin had been hidden in the Nile when the time came to take it up out of Egypt. Serah daughter of Asher was among those who entered the Land with Joshua, and would now have been very many hundreds of years old. Those who find their belief being stretched beyond limits may rationalize that the ancient SPIRIT of the wise Serah spoke through the lips of the mysterious wise woman of Aveil Beis Ma'achah. "ANOKHI SH'LOOMEY EMOONEY YISRAEL" – "I am from among the complete believers of Israel" (v 19). This woman was the inner soul of the long-suffering people, appealing to Joab for an end to the cycle of bloodshed. She wanted him to understand that the inhabitants of the town harbored no traitorous feelings against David. In her words to Joab in v 18 – "Let them surely ask in Aveil and they would certainly make peace" – she alluded to the Torah law that when an Israelite army makes war against a gentile city, they should first offer them peace (Deut. 20:10). How much more so, then, should Joab invite the Israelite inhabitants of Aveil to make peace!

The wise woman persuaded the inhabitants to deliver Sheva ben Bichri to Joab because otherwise the entire town would be killed. Normally if someone threatens to kill all the members of a group unless they hand over one of their number, it is forbidden to do so, because "we do not cast off one soul in order to save another". However, "if the designated individual deserves the death penalty like Sheva ben Bichri, they should give him over, though we do not issue such a ruling from the outset. However, if he does not deserve the death penalty they should all die rather than hand over a single Israelite soul" (Rambam, Yesodei HaTorah 5:5).

With the delivery of Sheva ben Bichri's head to Joab, the revolt was at an end and now that David's kingship was reestablished, our text concludes by enumerating his principal officers.

<http://www.azamra.org/Bible/II%20Samuel%2021-22.htm>

II SAMUEL CHAPTER 21

Our present chapter is highly opaque allegory which can be unraveled only partially with the help of the Midrash of the Rabbis.

“And there was famine in the days of David for three years” (v 2). As the narrative draws towards the conclusion of the history of David, it shows how he settled all outstanding accounts in his lifetime. David understood that the cause of the famine lay in some national moral flaw and sought out God to show him what it was.

According to the rabbinic interpretation of v 1 as brought by Rashi, the flaw related to Saul but had two somewhat different sides to it. On the one hand, Saul had never been properly buried and eulogized because of the national panic that followed his defeat by the Philistines. This was a flaw in the honor due to the kingship. On the other hand, Saul himself had caused a flaw through his “killing” of the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites were the Canaanite inhabitants of the town of Gibeon, who had tricked Joshua and the princes of the Tribes into making an oath to protect them even though they were forbidden to make a covenant with the Canaanites (Joshua ch 9). On discovering the trick, Joshua turned the Gibeonites into a caste of Temple wood-hewers and water-drawers, but he was unable to nullify the oath of protection because of the desecration of God's Name that would be caused by Israel's failure to keep an oath even if extracted by trickery.

Some rabbis held that when Saul slaughtered the Cohanim (priests) of Nov for aiding David (I Samuel ch 22), this cut off the livelihood they provided to the Gibeonites, which was considered tantamount to killing them. Other rabbis held that during the massacre in Nov, Saul actually did kill two Gibeonite hewers of wood, two drawers of water, an attendant, a manager and a scribe (Rashi on v 1). Either way, this was considered a breach of Israel's oath of protection of the Gibeonites, and now the Gibeonites demanded justice. They were in the position of GO'EL HADAM (“redeemer of the blood”) of their fallen compatriots – and they were implacable. They demanded to be given seven members of Saul's household to kill in vengeance for the seven dead Gibeonites, and because of their cruel insistence, verse 2 says that “the Gibeonites were not from the Children of Israel” – implying that they lacked the three defining characteristics of Israel: compassion, bashfulness and kindness (Talmud Yevamos 79a).

David agreed to give over seven members of Saul's house in order that justice should not only be done but should also be seen to have been done. Although our text states that five of the seven were the sons of Michal, Saul's younger daughter, our rabbis taught that they were actually the sons of his older daughter Meirav, since it was she and not Michal who was married to Adriel (v 8, see I Samuel 18:19). However, since Michal foster-mothered these

children after the death of Meirav, they were accounted as Michal's children, teaching the great merit of fostering orphans (Talmud Sanhedrin 19b).

The Torah forbids leaving the bodies of hanged criminals overnight, let alone for six months (Deut. 21:23), but in this case a great KIDDUSH HASHEM ("Sanctification of God's Name") came about when gentile passers-by saw the bodies and asked why they were there. When they were told that they had been hanged to make amends for Saul's breach of the Israelite covenant with the Gibeonites, the gentiles were so impressed by the Israelite respect for their oath that 150,000 converted (1 Kings 5:29, Talmud Yevamos 79a).

Through the righteousness of Saul's concubine Ritzpah daughter of Ayah in camping out by the bodies and driving away the predatory vultures, the bodies were preserved intact for over six months from the time of the barley harvest (Nissan) until the rains came (Heshvan). The downfall of rain after three years of famine showed that the flaw had been rectified (Metzudas David on v 10), and the bones of the seven members of Saul's house were taken for burial together with the bones of Saul and Jonathan. The state funeral that was now held for the latter rectified the affront to their honor in not having been properly buried and mourned immediately after their death on the battlefield.

We may thus infer that although Saul fell because he failed to extirpate Amalek, this did not make him a "bad" king. On the contrary, Saul had been an outstanding Tzaddik, a mighty warrior and a savior of his people, and the establishment of David's kingship was only complete when the proper respect was shown to Saul and any remaining flaws were rectified. As for the Gibeonites, while Joshua had banned them from marrying into the Assembly of Israel only when the Temple stood, David added to the ban and forbade them to marry into the Assembly even when there was no Temple (RaDaK on v 1). Because of their display of cruelty, they were thus permanently excluded from the Assembly of Israel.

"And there was more war with the Philistines" (v 15). "And it was afterwards that there was more war in Gov with the Philistines" (v 18). "There is no before and afterwards in the Torah": these wars with the Philistines had taken place earlier in David's reign (Rashi on v 18) and are mentioned here in order to complete the story of the killing of the four giant sons of "Harafa" (= "the giantess"), whom the rabbis identified with Orpah, daughter-in-law of Naomi and sister-in-law of David's great grandmother, Ruth (Talmud Sotah 42b; see commentary on I Samuel ch 17). These four giants allude to impure kelipos ("husks") which Mashiach has to crush.

".and David was faint. And Yishbi in Nov." (vv 15-16). Some rabbis said that the actual name of this giant was Yishbi BeNov, while others said that David had to face Yishbi BECAUSE OF NOV – i.e. because he himself had been responsible for Saul's slaughter of the priests of Nov since he had fled to the Sanctuary there, causing the priests to be accused of treason. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 95) has a lengthy and very colorful aggadah about David's mysterious encounter with Yishbi, in which he was very nearly killed. Through a kind of telepathic message, Avishai realized that David was in extreme danger and went rushing off to save. On

the way he succeeded in killing Orpah, which devastated Yisbhi, and Avishai then rescued David through the invocation of God's name.

Although verse 19 attributes the killing of Goliath to "Elhanan ben Ya'arei Orgim", the Rabbis identify the latter with David himself, who was said to be "son of the forests of the weavers" because his family wove curtains for the Temple, which is called a "forest" (Rashi on v 19). Since we know from I Samuel ch 17 that it was David who killed Goliath, the use of another name for him in our present passage is an indication that cryptic verses such as this were included in the text for the sake of the midrashic teachings that derive from them.

Ps 90-92

[http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/Psalms/90\)-Prayer-for-God's-compassion-on-Hismortal-servants;-91\)-Safety-of-dwelling-in-God's-presence/default.aspx](http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/Psalms/90)-Prayer-for-God's-compassion-on-Hismortal-servants;-91)-Safety-of-dwelling-in-God's-presence/default.aspx)

"You Have Been Our Dwelling Place in All Generations" (Psalms 90-91)

We come now to Book IV of the Psalter, which, as pointed out in the Bible Reading Program's introduction to Psalms, appears to have originally been joined with Book V in a single collection. As the Zondervan NIV Study Bible notes, this section of the Psalter begins with Psalms 90-100, "a series of 11 psalms arranged within the frame 'you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations' (90:1) and 'his faithfulness continues through all generations' (100:5)—a series that begins with prayer and ends with praise. The first two of these psalms (90-91) are thematically connected (point and counterpoint); the next three (92-94) form a trilogy that serves as a transition to the final thematic cluster (95-99). At the very middle, Ps 95 anticipates the four following psalms and adds a warning for the celebrants of Yahweh's reign that echoes the warning of Moses in Dt 6:13-18.

Evidently the editors of the Psalter intended readers of this group of psalms to hear echoes of the voice of Moses as interceder (Ps 90) and as admonisher (95:8-11), through which ministries (shared also by Aaron and Samuel) Israel had been blessed under the reign of the Great King, Yahweh" (note on Psalms 90-100). We should also bear in mind that Books IV and V look forward to the coming reign of God over all the earth.

Psalm 90 is the only psalm attributed to Moses in the book of Psalms (although he wrote two other songs that we know of, found in Exodus 15 and Deuteronomy 32). This attribution makes Psalm 90 the psalm of oldest recorded origin. It is "a prayer to the everlasting God to have compassion on his servants, who through the ages have known him to be their safe haven (v. 1; see also 91:9) but who also painfully experience his wrath because of their sin and his sentence of death that cuts short their lives—a plea that through this long night of his displeasure God will teach them true wisdom (see v. 12...) and, in the morning after, bless them in equal measure with expressions of his love so that joy may yet fill their days and the days of their children and their daily labors be blessed. This psalm has many links with Ps 39" (note on Psalm 90).

The translation of verse 3 is disputed. Where the KJV and NKJV have “destruction,” other modern versions have “dust.” The word here literally denotes “powder,” though it can have the sense of “being crushed” or, as a footnote in the Jewish Publication Society Tanakh says, “contrition” (being broken and humbled). Paired with the word “return” in the next line, the idea in the KJV and NKJV seems to be that God has punished people for sin, bringing them to destruction or humbling, and then commands them to “Return” (to Him), this being the Old Testament term for “Repent.” Just as God would here be telling the people to return to Him in verse 3, Moses in verse 13 asks God to “Return” to His people—not in repentance but in attentive care. Yet those who advocate the word “dust” in verse 3 see the pairing with “return” as meaning that God commands mortal human beings to return to dust (i.e., to the ground), recalling the curse of Genesis 3:19. Moreover, this is seen to fit better with the imagery of people quickly perishing in the verses that follow (Psalm 90:4-6). It should be noted, however, that Moses used a very different word for dust in Genesis 3. And the context of quickly perishing could just as well mean, “Repent, for you don’t have much time.”

Life can sometimes seem long to people—like they have plenty of time to do whatever they will do. But a human lifetime, indeed, as long a time as human beings have been around, is only a very short period in God’s eternal perspective. Moses says that a thousand years (just over the longest time that anyone had ever lived, perhaps hearkening back to Adam, Methuselah and Noah, who lived to be 930, 969 and 950 respectively) are gone as yesterday (a single day) to God—or as an even shorter period of time, a watch in the night having been about four hours in the Old Testament period (verse 4). Early rabbinic tradition came to view this verse, juxtaposed with God’s Sabbath command about resting from daily toil, as meaning that the thousands of years of human history are represented by the days of the week—6,000 years of man’s sin and futile toil followed by a 1,000-year Sabbath of God’s rule. The apostle Peter appears to have been referring to Psalm 90:4 when He wrote of Christ’s coming at the end of human history: “But beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise” (2 Peter 3:8-9).

The NIV apparently gives the correct sense of the beginning of verse 5 in Psalm 90: “You sweep men away in the sleep of death.” The latter part of the verse and verse 6 compare human life to grass springing up in the morning and, in the heat of the sun, withering by the end of the day. This should not be construed literally to mean that grass lives only one day—though it sometimes does live only a few days in the Middle Eastern deserts. This is rather a figurative picture, keeping with the imagery of human life as beginning and ending within a single “day.”

Verse 8 is a reminder that God sees all of our sins—even our secret ones. We may hide things from other people, but we can’t hide them from God—and His perspective is the one that ultimately counts.

In verse 9 Moses laments, “All our days pass away under your wrath” (NIV)—so that “we finish our years like a sigh.” In its note on verse 7, The Nelson Study Bible states regarding being consumed by God’s anger and wrath: “The allusion is to the anger of God against the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness (see Num. 13; 14). An entire generation spent their lives wandering in the wilderness because of their unbelief and rebellion.” Other commentators, however, suggest that the context is not the wilderness experience of Israel but life outside the Garden of Eden. “If fellowship with God could be pictured as life lived together in a Garden, then it was sin that had excluded humanity from such a wonderful life (Gen. 3:22-24). Accordingly man now lives outside the Garden under the wrath of God” (George Knight, Psalms, comments on Psalm 90).

The latter idea here seems to fit better with the age limits Moses cites in verse 10. He presents a typical human life span as 70 years and points out that it may be extended to 80 if someone’s physical constitution permits. This is not to cap human life at 80, but it does seem to label 80 as being a rather old age for people. Yet consider that Moses himself was already 80 at the time of the Exodus. After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, he lived to be 120—and his brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, were even older when they died around that time. It seems odd that at such an age, looking back over the years of wilderness wandering, Moses would be saying that life might be stretched to 80. This fact would seem to support Moses having written this psalm closer to the time of the Exodus, when he perhaps did not expect to live to be 120—so that, as mentioned above, God’s judgment in the psalm would refer to the whole of human experience since the Garden of Eden rather than merely Israel’s years of wandering.

In any case, Moses’ point in verse 10 is that human life is brief and that, even if it’s longer than usual, it’s still filled with labor and sorrow. It brings to mind Jacob’s statement to the Egyptian pharaoh: “The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage” (Genesis 47:9).

The Expositor’s Bible Commentary states that the beginning of Psalm 90:11 is meant in the sense of a “strong affirmation: ‘Nobody knows the power of your anger!’” The rest of the verse apparently means that the fear of God is justified because of what His wrath can result in. The point is that man should live carefully, with awe and respect for God, fearing to disobey Him. Moses in verse 12 asks God to “teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” The idea here, the central point of the psalm for our sakes, is that we come to recognize how short our time is, to value the time we have so as to use it wisely (compare Ephesians 5:15-16; Colossians 4:5).

In Psalm 90:13, Moses pleads with God to return—meaning, as mentioned earlier, to revisit His servants with help and care. He interjects with the question common to laments, “How long?” (verse 13)—how long will it be until God does what he is asking. When will God return and satisfy us with His unfailing love so that we may be glad and rejoice? (verse 14). Moses

asks that God make us glad in proportion to the affliction He has laid on us in this life (verse 15). In fact, He will ultimately go far beyond that. For as the apostle Paul writes in Romans 8:18, “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Moses prays that God’s beauty (verse 17), the wonderful vision of His work and glory (verse 16), would be upon us, giving our lives and work a sense of continuity and meaning. His loving intervention for us establishes true value and purpose for life. “Frail, limited, and sinful as man is, the love of God can transform what is weak to His own glory” (Expositor’s, note on verse 17).

The Zondervan NIV Study Bible, in its introductory note on Psalm 90, states: “So that the melancholy depiction of the human state here might not stand alone, the editors of the Psalter have followed it immediately with a psalm that speaks in counterpoint of the happy condition of those who ‘dwell in the shelter of the Most High’ (91:1 [compare 90:1]) and ‘make the Most High {their} dwelling’ (91:9; see also 92:13). To isolate Ps 90 from this context is to distort its intended function in the Psalter collection. See also Ps 103.”

Psalm 91 is without attribution in the Hebrew Masoretic Text. The Greek Septuagint version adds a superscription saying that the psalm is “of David.” We should note a thematic connection between the previous psalm and this one. Psalm 90 begins with the words, “Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations” (verse 1). This psalm begins, “He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” (91:1; compare verse 9). The Zondervan NIV Study Bible refers to Psalm 91 as “a glowing testimony to the security of those who trust in God—set beside Ps 90 as a counterpoint to the dismal depiction of the human condition found there” (note on Psalm 91).

The first two verses present four different designations for God: Elyown (“Most High”); Shaddai (“Almighty” though perhaps meaning All-Nourishing or All-Sufficient as the root shad means “breast”); Yahweh (translated “the Lord” but meaning “He Is That He Is,” signifying Eternal, Ever-living or Self-Existent); and Elohi (“My God” or “My Strong One”). These distinctions communicate various aspects of God’s nature. Note in verse 14 that God sets on high those who have known His name—not referring to Hebrew pronunciation but to understanding who He is and what He is all about, which His names help to reveal.

Dwelling “in the secret place of the Most High” (verse 1) recalls David’s words in Psalms 27:5 and 31:20, which mention God hiding His people in the secret place of His presence within His tabernacle or pavilion. Abiding “under the shadow of the Almighty” (Psalm 91:1) is related to verse 4: “And He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge.” This is a figurative picture of God as a mother bird sheltering its young—imagery found elsewhere in David’s psalms (61:4; 63:7). As noted before, the word for “wings” can also denote “skirts” or the borders of a garment—with the imagery of a man taking a woman under his wing as symbolic of marriage (see the Bible Reading Program comments on Ruth). It is

likely that parent-child and husband-wife metaphors are being blended in these various references to show the great care God has in protecting His people—as the imagery is also blended with the idea of God being the defensive refuge and fortress of His people (compare 61:3-4; 91:2, 4). Psalm 91:3 says God will deliver His people “from the snare of the fowler”—that is, traps laid by bird catchers (see also 124:7)—again comparing God’s people to young birds.

The psalmist goes on to explain various ways that God’s people will be kept from harm. It is important to focus on this and hold tight to the scriptural promises here. However, we must recognize that while God’s people have His certain promise of protection, this does not mean that no harm of any kind will ever come to them in this life. Note verse 7, where thousands will fall around you but you yourself as a servant of God will not be touched. This has often been the experience of God’s people, just as declared here. But the verse does not say that God’s people will never be touched by peril or death. Verse 10 should be understood in the context of verse 7—that when many around God’s people fall, they will be spared. Here, too, it is not stated that no calamity will ever befall those who serve God. The psalm itself points out that they will experience trouble in life (verse 15). Consider what happened to Job, David, Paul and others—and even to Jesus Christ, the quintessential righteous person.

Verses 11-12 say that God has commissioned His angels with protecting His people—that they will carry you through life “lest you dash your foot against a stone.” So do God’s people never stub their toes? That is not what is meant here. It does not say, “...so that you will never dash your foot against a stone.” Rather, the point is that God’s angels often intervene to protect us, sometimes even from seemingly minor harm. In the monumental confrontation between Jesus and Satan prior to the start of Jesus’ ministry, the devil resorted to quoting Scripture, twisting it to suit his aims. And he chose these verses among others to make his challenge. He told Jesus to throw Himself from the pinnacle of the temple because Psalm 91:11-12 promised that God’s angels would be there to catch Him (Matthew 4:5-6). Jesus countered, “It is also written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test’” (verse 7, NIV)—quoting Deuteronomy 6:16, referring to the negative sense of challenging God’s grace. Clearly God’s promise of protection does not mean that we may arrogantly presume on His favor through trying to set the terms of how He must intervene for us (by deliberately placing ourselves in harm’s way).

Besides helping us to better understand Psalm 91, Jesus’ response teaches us something else about comprehending the Bible in general by His words “it is also written.” We should not base our understanding of a biblical subject on just one or a few verses when there are others that bear on the matter. Rather, we are to consider all of the verses that bear on a matter and deduce the truth from the whole of pertinent Scripture.

With all this in perspective, let’s notice more specifically what Psalm 91 tells us. Verse 3 does not say that we will never fall into an enemy trap or experience deadly illness. Yet we can take confidence that God says here that He will deliver us from these. Sometimes this means keeping us from them (perhaps most of the time), but it may mean rescuing us after a period

of affliction. And at times ultimate deliverance—salvation—is in view. Even if we should die, God will later resurrect us to be utterly impervious to harm, just as He is.

Verses 5-6 do not say that we will never experience terrifying situations, disease or devastation though He often spares us from these. But when these do come, confidence in God's care and His overall plan will help us to not "be afraid"—that is, to not live in fear. Even this does not mean that we will never go through doubting moments of worry and fright. Rather, the idea is that, if we earnestly seek God, our lives will not be characterized by fear but by faith (compare 94:19).

In the concluding verses, God Himself speaks within the words of the psalm (91:14-16). Verse 15 assures us that He will answer our prayers and that, whatever troubles do befall us, He will be with us in them—helping us to endure them. Moreover, we see again here that God will deliver us (verses 14-15), if not immediately then over time—and certainly when we are later resurrected to be in His Kingdom. "Long life" and "salvation" in the final verse applies most fully to that future time. God often does bless His people with longevity and deliverance in this life, but consider that Jesus Christ, the most righteous person to ever live, died at age 33. The ultimate long and satisfying life is that which is still to come—in contrast to the brevity and sorrow of life today as presented in Psalm 90.

[http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/Psalms/92\)-Thanks-to-God-for-His-faithfulness,whereby-the-righteous-will-triumph-and-the-wicked-will-perish;-93\)-The-eternal-andinvincible-reign-of-God;-94\)-Prayer-for-God-to-bring-justice/default.aspx](http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/Psalms/92)-Thanks-to-God-for-His-faithfulness,whereby-the-righteous-will-triumph-and-the-wicked-will-perish;-93)-The-eternal-andinvincible-reign-of-God;-94)-Prayer-for-God-to-bring-justice/default.aspx)

"The Lord Reigns" (Psalms 92-94)

No author is given for Psalm 92, though some suggest that verses 10-11 may imply that one of the Davidic kings composed it. The psalm is described in the superscription as "A Song for the Sabbath day," the only psalm designated this way in the Psalter. The Zondervan NIV Study Bible notes on this title: "In the postexilic liturgy [worship service] of the temple, this psalm came to be sung at the time of the morning sacrifice on the Sabbath. (The rest of the weekly schedule was: first day, Ps 24; second day, Ps 48; third day, Ps 82; fourth day, Ps 94; fifth day, Ps 81; sixth day, Ps 93.)" This schedule is reflected in both the Talmud and the psalm headings in the Greek Septuagint (see Expositor's Bible Commentary, footnote on 92:1 and introductory note on Psalm 24). While the weekly Sabbath is a memorial to God's creation, culminating in mankind, it also looks forward to His completion of man's creation in the age to come. As shown in Hebrews 3-4, the Sabbath represents the time of God's Kingdom.

Psalm 90 began the present cluster of psalms with the troubles of life in this age, seeking God's compassion on those who abide in Him and looking forward to future reward. Psalm 91 followed with God's deliverance of those who dwell with Him, to be fully realized in an ultimate sense at the end of the present age. Now, Psalm 92 further progresses into God's ultimate deliverance of His people (those planted in His house), along with judgment on the wicked.

This ties in well with the Sabbath as representative of the time when God's Kingdom will be established on earth. And it all serves to introduce Books IV and V of the Psalter, which in general look forward to that wonderful time.

Zondervan's introductory note on Psalm 92 calls it "a joyful celebration of the righteous rule of God. Its testimony to the prosperity of the righteous, 'planted in the house of the Lord' (v. 13), links it thematically with Ps 91...while its joy over God's righteous reign relates it to the cluster of psalms that follow (Ps 93-100; see especially Ps 94). There are, in fact, reasons to believe that the editors of the Psalter brought together Ps 92-94 as a trilogy that serves as a bridge between Ps 90-91 and 95-99."

The psalmist sums up the reasons for praising God as His great works and His deep thoughts (verses 4-5). Senseless, foolish men don't grasp the enormity of God's work or the scope of His thinking. The psalmist draws on the metaphor of grass, used in Psalm 90:5-6 for the brevity of human life, to particularly describe the fate of evildoers: they will flourish briefly, be scattered and then perish (92:7-9).

God has lifted up the psalmist's "horn," symbolic of his strength (verse 10; compare 75:4-5; 89:18, 24; 132:17). This imagery transitions to that of anointing oil, which was poured from a horn (see 1 Samuel 16:13). As noted above, the mention in Psalm 92 of anointing (verse 10) and evil enemies brought down (verse 11; compare 54:7; 59:10) has led some to see a king as the psalm's author-though priests were also anointed, as were some prophets, and these had enemies too. In any case, many view the reference here as prefiguring the future Anointed One or Messiah.

In its note on the conclusion of Psalm 92 (verses 12-15), Expositor's states: "How different is the tone of these verses from the lament of 90:5-6! The wicked are easily swept away whereas the 'righteous' (...cf. 1:6) are likened to a 'palm tree' and to 'a cedar of Lebanon' ([Psalm 92] v. 12). Both trees are symbolic of strength, longevity, and desirability (cf. v. 14; Isa 2:13; 65:22; Hos 14:5-6; Zech 11:2). The metaphorical representation of trees growing and bearing fruit 'in the courts' of the Lord ([Psalm 92] v. 13; cf. 84:2, 10) suggests the closeness of the righteous to their God (cf. Isa 61:3; Jer 32:41). For a similar expression, see [Psalm] 52:8, where the psalmist [i.e., David] compares himself to 'an olive tree flourishing in the house of God.' For the imagery of fruitfulness and vigor, see 1:3. Whereas the wicked perish prematurely, the godly rejoice in the promise that the Lord's favor rests on them even in old age"-indeed, especially in old age, meaning even beyond this physical life in perpetual spirit existence. As previously mentioned, the ultimate Anointed One died young in physical terms, at age 33, but, now resurrected, He will live on forever and ever-as will all those firmly planted in God's house (today signifying His spiritual temple, His Church, and ultimately meaning His eternal Kingdom and family).

Like Psalms 91 and 92, Psalms 93-100 are without attribution in the Hebrew Masoretic Text. However, the Greek Septuagint translation titles Psalms 93-99 as being "of David." Indeed,

two of these clearly are. The New Testament attributes Davidic authorship to Psalm 95 (see Hebrews 4:7). And Psalm 96 is taken from David's song to celebrate the ark's placement in the tabernacle in Jerusalem (compare 1 Chronicles 16:23-33).

One of the royal psalms (those which celebrate God as King), Psalm 93, as the Zondervan NIV Study Bible notes, is "a hymn to the eternal, universal and invincible reign of the Lord, a theme it shares with Ps 47; 95-99. Together these hymns offer a majestic confession of faith in and hope for the kingdom of God on earth. They were probably composed for the liturgy of a high religious festival [likely the Feast of Trumpets or Tabernacles] in which the kingship of the Lord-over the cosmic order, over the nations and in a special sense over Israel-was annually celebrated.... And implicitly, where not explicitly, the Lord's kingship is hailed in contrast to the claims of all other gods; he is 'the great King above all gods' (95:3).... Ps 93 appears to have been separated from Ps 95-99 to serve as a thematic pivot between Ps 92 and 94 (as Ps 47 was used as a pivot between Ps 46 and 48). It celebrates Yahweh's secure cosmic rule that grounds his righteous and effective rule over human affairs-which is the joy (Ps 92) and the hope (Ps 94) of those who rely on him for protection against the assaults of the godless fools who live by violence."

Luke 8:49 – 9:50

After reading this section a couple of times it seems to be mostly about healing and casting out of demons. Each time I read these sort of things I ask when will this begin to happen in our day? Not the phony stuff on the Benny Shinflyn show but the real raising of the dead and to have it documented.

There is a great deal I would like to say but time has run out on me and we have said enough for one week as it is.