

Ir-ot-25
Let Every Thing That Hath Breath Praise the Lord
(The Psalms)
By Lenet Hadley Read

(Here is more understanding about the prophecies in the Psalms and their fulfillment by Christ. Included is a description of how the Psalms were translated and a very brief playlet derived from that process, showing why they are so beautiful.)

- I. In spite of David's weaknesses, he became a prophet in his writing of the Psalms.
 - A. Jesus Christ Himself said the Psalms bore witness of Him.

“...all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Luke 24:44).
 - B. It must be noted that while David only wrote some of the Psalms, other writers also seemed blessed with the spirit of prophecy. .

- II. Regarding David, it seems the Spirit moved upon him so that when he spoke of his own experiences, it raised them into prophecy --- using phrases far beyond his own experiences.
 - A. For example, Psalm 22:13-18 actually describes Christ's crucifixion. [Such as his hands and feet being pierced; and that his garments were divided by lot].
 - B. *Crucifixion was not established until 1,000 years after David. And Jesus' crucifixion was like no other, such as the parting of his garments by lot.*
 - C. *Thus David's writings, while germinating from his own sufferings (being hated with attempts on his life for the sake of his anointing), were magnified so that they actually fit Christ's experience! How marvelous is the way the Spirit works.*

- III. Furthermore, as David felt grief for his own sins, the Spirit magnified them into an expression of Israel's grief for *their* sins. **So many Psalms also speak for a scattered Israel longing to be forgiven and brought back to God.** See how the following blends from David to Israel.
 - A. **“Have mercy upon me, O God ... blot out my transgressions.... Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shall thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness”** (Psalm 51:1, 18-19).
 - B. Furthermore, in *many* psalms David, an outcast at times himself, speaks in behalf of scattered Israel as outcasts:

“O God, thou has cast us off, thou hast scattered us... O turn thyself to us again”
Psalms 60:1)
 - C. Also, David, in returning to God, expresses the *joys* of Israel's future redemption:

“Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment... Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my law giver... Who will bring me unto the strong city?... Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off...” (Psalm 60:3,7, 9-10).
 - D. Finally some psalms which spoke of Solomon's ascending the throne, also prophesied of Christ, of His Second Coming and His Millennial Reign.
 1. See Psalm 72:2, 6, 8, 11. This Psalm, while initially of Solomon, prophesies of Christ's Second Coming and of His glorious reign.

2. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said of these kinds of witnesses:
“Those with spiritual insight find in the Psalms priceless pearls of wisdom and revelation. Truly, their pleasant words and sweet similitudes open the eyes of our understanding with reference to the coming reign of the **Son** of David [i.e., Christ].” (*Millennial Messiah*, p. 594.) (Emphasis added).

IV. It is fascinating to learn how our English version of the scriptures, particularly the Psalms, came to be so beautifully expressed.

- A. By the early 1600’s, several versions of the Bible or parts of it had been translated by people of differing branches of Christianity. In an attempt to obtain one final version that would satisfy all Christians, King James assembled over 50 scholars to prepare a new translation. Their purpose was to compare and choose from among the many translations. But it is important to know in many cases the comparisons were made orally.
- B. **By reading out loud the different translations, and seeking the best one, much of the Bible was put into a translation that was very pleasing to the ear, and thus they created a translation that is very moving to the soul. This is particularly true with the Psalms.**
- C. Margaret Tuttle Sanchez gave an excellent explanation in “How the Psalms Were Prepared for King James,” *Ensign*, 1974. It is based on historical accounts of how the translation process was carried out. Each translator, working on the set of scriptures they were translating, held a previously translated version in his hand. The Bishop’s Bible was supposed to be the main translation considered, so its translation was read first. The group was then to choose from all the various translations that which was the best.
- D. Here is a brief, imaginary, playlet which reflects this process.

Bishop’s Bible Reader: “God is my shepherd...”

All others: “Wait!”

Geneva Bible Reader: “‘Shepherd’ is the correct meaning, but to begin by saying God is too abrupt. The rhythm is awkward. There is no melody to the line.”

Great Bible Reader: “Moreover the Hebrew word is ‘Jehovah’ that Coverdale and others have translated as ‘Lord.’”

Geneva Bible Reader: “Yes and the Geneva Bible gives a superior wording for the whole line, ‘The Lord is my Shepherd.’”

Bishop’s Bible Reader: “Make a note of that. And let us continue. ‘Therefore I can lack nothing.’”

Geneva Bible Reader: “That is a correct translation. But there is more simplicity and power in the Geneva Bible’s rendition. ‘The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.’”

Bishop’s Bible Reader: “Okay make a note of that. Let us continue. ‘He will cause me to repose myself in pasture full of grass.’”

Great Bible Reader: “The Great Bible states: ‘He shall feed me in a green pasture.’”

Geneva Bible Reader: “The Geneva Bible agrees on this and gives a valuable alternative. ‘He maketh me to rest in green pasture.’”

Bishop’s Bible Reader: “‘He maketh me...’ The alliteration is very effective. It gives it

rhythm. But make me to what? ‘Repose myself’ and ‘rest’ both suggest the same thing. But how else could it be said if the Lord were a shepherd and I were a sheep?”

Great Bible Reader: “It doesn’t say this in any of the current translations. But how about ‘He maketh me to lie down?’”

All others: “‘Lie down’ is much better!”

Bishop’s Bible Reader: “The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.’ Very good. Make a note of that. Let us continue...”ⁱ

V. Some seem to be disturbed at hearing the different expressions that can come up in translating. We need to understand that translating from one language to another is very challenging. Usually there is more than one way the concept can be expressed. For one thing, there may be no one word that has exactly the same meaning in two different languages. So we should be very grateful for those who worked so hard and so cooperatively to bring us such a beautiful, inspiring translation of the Psalms and other Biblical writings.
