

## PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

### Psalm One Hundred And Forty-Seven - Sustaining Mental Health By Praising God For His Gracious Provisions (Psalm 147:1-20)

#### I. Introduction

- A. People who suffer mental problems stand in need of **correcting** debilitating views that create their pain!
- B. Psalm 147 offers a **preventative viewpoint** for the mind to keep it thinking wholesomely as follows:

#### II. Sustaining Mental Health By Praising God For His Gracious Provisions, Psalm 147:1-20:

- A. The psalmist noted it was "good" to sing praises to Elohim, that it was pleasant and fitting to do so, 147:1.
- B. The word "good" comes from the Hebrew term, *tov*, a word picturing "practical or economical benefit" to man, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, v. I, p. 345.
- C. When we view this word in the context of the other values supplied to praising God in Ps. 147:1, we see the psalmist urging his readers to follow his praise of God described in the psalm for their mental benefit:
  - 1. Besides being "good" (*tov*), praising God as the psalmist guides us is also pleasant and fitting.
  - 2. These two additional benefits of praising God are akin to Paul's call for believers to overcome anxiety over interpersonal conflicts by filling their minds with God's upright thoughts, Philippians 4:3, 6-9:
    - a. Paul addressed a conflict in the Church between two ladies, Euodias and Syntyche, Phil. 4:2.
    - b. This had led to anxiety, so Paul urged believers not to be anxious, but to let their requests for help be made known unto God so His peace would guard their hearts and minds in Christ, Phil. 4:6-7.
    - c. Then, to **sustain** that peace, believers were to think on wholesome truths of the Lord, Phil. 4:8-9a. Then the **God** of peace would be *with* them, a stronger practical peace of mind provision, Phil. 4:9b.
  - 3. Thus, applying the teachings of the psalmist in Psalm 147 would **sustain** one's peace and mental health!
- D. Thus, we apply Psalm 147 for practical **preventative** measures to sustain a healthy **viewpoint** as follows:
  - 1. We should praise God for His **gracious** provisions to the downcast to help them in their needs, 147:2-6:
    - a. God is to be praised for gathering Israel's exiles and healing their broken and wounded spirits, v. 2-3.
    - b. God's great and personal insight of the distant stars indicates He has great understanding to minister to our personal needs of heart when we need His help, Ps. 147:4-5.
    - c. All we must do is submit to His righteousness and we will escape His wrath and be sustained, 147:6.
  - 2. We should praise God for His **manifold provisions** for our livelihoods, Ps. 147:7-9:
    - a. God is to be thanked for supplying us the rain that feeds us through growing of crops, Ps. 147:7-8.
    - b. Those crops are also used for growing animals we use for food, Ps. 147:9a.
    - c. In fact, God even provides food for the ceremonially unclean bird, the raven, and for His feeding even the young raven who is usually the last or least significant animal to be fed, Ps. 147:9b!
  - 3. We should praise God for His **gracious** provisions for those who fear Him, for God does not take pleasure in men who rely on the horse or themselves, but who put their hope in His loyal love, 147:10f.
  - 4. We should praise God for His **manifold provisions** for our livelihoods, Ps. 147:12-18:
    - a. God is to be praised for giving His people national peace from war, Ps. 147:12-14a.
    - b. He is to be praised for giving His people the finest of foods, Ps. 147:14b.
    - c. He is to be praised for supplying a **check** on the potentially destructive forms of precipitation that occur on the earth (snow, frost, hailstones) so that the water is tamed (melted) and made useful (the waters flow) for giving us food, Ps. 147:15-18 with v. 7-9 above.
  - 5. We should praise God for His **gracious** provisions for His people, Ps. 147:19-20.
- E. To sum it all up, the psalmist repeats his call for God's people to praise the Lord, Ps. 147:21.

***Lesson:*** It is good **PREVENTATIVE** medicine regarding mental health to focus on the Lord's gracious, manifold provisions for deliverance and livelihood supplies in our behalf. An effective way to do so is to praise God for His manifold provisions supplied to us in grace as is taught in Psalm 147.

***Application:*** (1) Departing from God's **UNMERITED** favor to adopt a **SELF-HELP, LEGALISTICALLY** attained favor is mentally perilous. (2) Departing from depending on **GOD'S** help for livelihood need supplies to depend on ourselves or others for these is mentally perilous! (3) Thus, heeding Ps. 147 brings us back to **GOD'S** help and away from destructive self-sufficiency!