

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Psalm 90

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INTRODUCTION**40 YEARS AGO**

- Population of the World...4,139,572,031
- Population of Canada...23,449,000
- Population of Alberta...1,838,035
- Population of Edmonton...461, 559
- Population of St. Albert...23, 905

40 YEARS AGO

- Monarch of the Commonwealth-*Queen Elizabeth II*
- Chairman of the People's Republic of China-*Mao Zai Tung* dies & is replaced by *Hua Guofeng*
- Chairman of the United Soviet Socialist Republic-*Leonid Brezhnev*
- President of the United States-*Gerald Ford* until November when *Jimmy Carter* is elected
- Prime Minister of England-*James Callaghan*
- Prime Minister of Canada –*Pierre Elliot Trudeau*
- **Premier of Alberta** –*Peter Lougheed*
- Mayor of St. Albert- *Richard Plain*
- Mayor of Edmonton – *Terry Cavanagh*

40 YEARS AGO

- The U.S. celebrates its Bicentennial
- An earthquake in China kills 655,000
- The world's first recorded Ebola virus epidemic begins in Sudan
- Palestinian extremists hijack a plane with 258 on board...taking it to Uganda...where Israeli commandos free the hostage...
- Khmer Rouge take over Cambodia

40 YEARS AGO

- Summer Olympics are held in Montreal, Quebec
- Bruce Jenner (now Caitlan) won the Olympic Decathlon
- Winter Olympics are held in Innsbruck, Austria
- World Series Champions – Cincinnati Reds
- NBA Championship – Boston Celtics
- Superbowl– Pittsburgh Steelers

- Stanley Cup Champions – Montreal Canadians
- Grey Cup Champions – Edmonton Eskimos...led by quarterback...Don Getty...

40 YEARS AGO

- *Happy Days, Laverne & Shirley & MASH & All In The Family*...most popular on TV...
- *Rocky & One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*...were premiered...on the 'big screen'...
- The most popular musicians were...*Barry Manilow, Diana Ross, Paul Simon, The Four Seasons, The Bay City Rollers, Paul McCartney & Wings, Elton John, Rod Stewart, Queen, ABBA*
- The CN Tower in Toronto...is completed and becomes the tallest free standing structure in the world...
- The Apple Computer Company is formed by Steve Jobs & Steve Wozniak
- The Concorde Jet cuts Trans-Atlantic flights to 3.5 hours.
- NASA unveiled it first space shuttle...the *Enterprise*
- The 'Timbit' was introduced...

40 YEARS AGO

- Average Cost of new house...\$ 42,000.00
- Average wages per year...\$ 15,500.00
- Average cost of a new mid-size car...\$ 3200.00
- Cost of a liter of gas...20 cents

40 YEARS AGO

- Among the North American Baptists...
 - The total number of churches was 352...
 - The total number of members was 57,034
 - The total number of baptisms was 2031
 - The total per capita giving was \$303.00/year

AND FOR THE RECORD

40 YEARS AGO

- I was just 22 year old...

CERTAINLY

- A lot of things DO change...*in 40 years*...
 - I only have to look in the mirror...

AND OF COURSE

- A lot CAN happen in those years...
 - Happy things & hard things...

- Strong things & stressful things...
- Exciting things & exhausting things...

BUT

40 YEARS AGO

- Something must have been ‘stirring’...
 - An excitement...
 - A growing anticipation...
 - The *Spirit of God*...in this region...
 - A VISION...among a group of ‘Jesus people’...
 - TO...BE a community OF ‘faith’...
SO AS
 - TO...IMPACT a community WITH ‘faith’...

40 YEARS AGO

- Something must have been ‘happening’...
 - In the Kingdom of *God*...

BECAUSE

- Here we are TODAY...

THAT IS WHY

- It is **GOOD** and **RIGHT**...
 - FOR...us to be doing...exactly what we are doing...**today**...
 - FOR...us to be **celebrating**...

IF FACT

- I have been saying for many years...

THAT

- **WE ...AS GOD’S PEOPLE...JUST DON’T CELEBRATE ENOUGH!!**

BECAUSE

- In the 40 years...that *Sturgeon Valley Baptist* has been in existence...CONSIDER...
 - How many people have been introduced to Jesus?
 - How many people have chosen to follow Jesus?
 - How many people have felt the waters of baptism and the transforming power of His Holy Spirit ‘wash’ over their surrendered lives?
 - How many people have been ‘schooled’ in all that it means...
 - TO...live justly?
 - TO...love mercy?
 - TO...walk humbly...with the *Lord*?
 - How many times the truth of **God’s Word** has been taught...
 - In Sunday morning worship services?
 - In Sunday School classes?

- On Wednesday evening Bible Studies?
 - In home groups?
 - During special meetings?
 - Among children & youth & parents & seniors...in a variety of clubs and groups and events?
- In the past 40 years...CONSIDER...
 - How much money has been raised...
 - TO...strengthen the work of the Kingdom?
 - TO...facilitate ministry in this community and in neighbourhoods around this region?
 - TO...enable specially called leaders to serve...
 - IN...far away places?
 - IN...unusual circumstances?
 - IN...difficult environments?
- In the past 40 years...CONSIDER...
 - How many widows have been comforted?
 - How many orphans have experienced family?
 - How many foreigners...immigrants...refugees...have found a home?
 - How many strangers have been embraced?
- In the past 40 years...CONSIDER...
 - How many prayers been lifted up?
 - How many songs of praise & words of adoration...have echoed through the heaven-lies?
- There can be NO DOUBT...

THAT

- It is GOOD...

AND

- It is RIGHT...
 - FOR...us to **celebrate...**

BUT OF COURSE

- We KNOW...

THAT

- In celebrating...we are NOT here...
 - TO...applaud... *Sturgeon Valley Baptist Church...*
- You have NOT come together...this day...
 - TO...to offer each other a proverbial 'pat on the back'...
 - *Great job...for the last 40 years...*

NATURALLY

- We should feel GREAT...
 - About this day...

AND

- About all that has brought us to this great moment...

BUT ULTIMATELY

- Celebrating US...
 - Only amounts to 'veiled humanism'...

SO

- As *God's people*...we KNOW...

THAT

- We are REALLY here...
 - TO...celebrate our *Lord*...

SPECIFICALLY

- TO...celebrate *God's* faithfulness...

BECAUSE

- For 40 years...
 - *Sturgeon Valley Baptist* has been...
 - ***BUILDING ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD!***
- Over these past **four decades**...
 - *Sturgeon Valley Baptist* has NOT been...building...
 - UPON... the resourcefulness of its people ...
 - THOUGH... its people have always been committed...
NOR
 - UPON...the strategic prowess of its leadership...
 - THOUGH...its leadership has always been effective...
NOR
 - UPON...crispness of its vision...
 - THOUGH...its vision has always been challenging & strong...
NOR
 - UPON...commitment of its givers...
 - THOUGH...giving, here, has always been sacrificial...
- Since its inception in 1976...
 - *Sturgeon Valley Baptist*...**'IS'...WHAT IT IS...**

BECAUSE OF

- *Who God Is*...

BUT

- To say this...is to be...
 - NEITHER... 'self-effacing'...
 - NOR...granting permission to 'abdicate'...

IN FACT

- All of *Scripture* reminds us...

THAT

- We are...

AND

- We have always been...
 - **Created**...to be in a personal...intimate...relationship with our *Creator*...

THAT

- We are part of a **divine romance**...

AND AS SUCH

- We...as **God's people**...have been entrusted...
 - WITH...incredible TREASURES...in these 'earthen vessels'...
 - WITH...*His* love...
 - WITH...*His* uncompromising forgiveness...
 - WITH...life...abundant and free...
 - WITH...the wonder of *His* indwelling presence...
 - WITH...the power of *His Spirit* within us...
 - WITH...the fruits of *His Spirit*...to facilitate how we 'live'...
 - WITH...the gifts of *His Spirit*...to facilitate how we 'serve'...
 - WITH...the *Great Commandment*...compelling us to 'love'...
 - WITH...the *Great Commission*...challenging us to 'multiply'...to make disciples...
 - WITH...the Church...each other...the fellowship of the saints...to keep us accountable...

AND OF COURSE

To whom much is given...much is required...
(Luke 12:48)

SO

- It almost 'goes without saying'...

BUT

- Let me say it...

THAT

- It remains for us...to be...
 - **Responsible**...

BUT JUST AS IMPORTANT

- It remains for us...to be...
 - Expectant...

- ‘On the edge of our seat’ alert...
- Preparedly hopeful...

YET AGAIN

- NOT...for what we can humanly orchestrate...
- RATHER...for what *He* desires to yet accomplish...

FRIENDS, BROTHERS & SISTERS

- Knowing what our *Lord* has faithfully accomplished...
 - In the past...
- **BUILDING ON HIS FAITHFULNESS...**
 - It is OURS...
 - TO...consider what *He* has ‘in store’...
 - TO...work with *Him*.
 - Into the future...
 - Into the days & weeks & years ahead...
 - TO...soak in...
 - Great expectations...

ILLUSTRATION

- This morning...
 - AS...we **celebrate *God’s* faithfulness...**
 - WHILE...**looking ahead to what *He* has next...**
- Almost immediately...
 - A familiar song begins to ‘play’ in my head...
 - A classic ‘hymn’ of the faith...
 - Written in 1714 by *Isaac Watts*...
- The lyrics...of this historical song...
 - Have particular pertinence for a day such as this...

BECAUSE

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.*

*Under the shadow of Thy throne
Still may we dwell secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.*

*Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,*

*From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.*

*Time, like an ever rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.*

*Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home.
(Isaac Watts)*

- *Isaac Watts* wrote this hymn...based on *Psalm 90*...
 - As part of a poetic collection of the Psalms which included...
 - "*Joy to the World*" based on *Psalm 98*

AND

- "*Jesus Shall Reign*" based on *Psalm 72*.
(Donovan, Richard Niell. *Hymn Story: O God, Our Help in Ages Past*. 2008)

BUT

- What you may...or...may not know...IS...

THAT

- In the *Psalms*...*Psalm 90*...has been identified as...
 - A **prayer** of *Moses*...

REALLY

- The **only prayer**...in the *Psalms*...attributed to *Moses*...
- In this prayer...*Moses* soberly reflects upon the passage of time...

IN PARTICULAR

- How quickly our lives...as human beings...slips by...

AS

- He confesses to the **Lord**...

*4 A thousand years are but as yesterday to you,
To you, O Lord, they are like a single hour!*

*5-6 We glide along the tides of time as swiftly as a racing river
and vanish as quickly as a dream.*

*We are like grass that is green in the morning
but mowed down and withered before the evening shadows fall.*

(SO)

*12 Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are;
help us to spend them as we should.*

(The Living Bible)

- In *Psalm 90*...*Moses* is **certainly** reflecting upon the fragile...even...fickle nature of the **human condition**...

BUT

- The **primary thrust** of *Moses*' prayer...is to focus upon the immutable...unchanging...nature of the **divine intention**...

THAT

- **GOD IS...WHO HE ALWAYS HAS BEEN...**
 - *Intentionally relational*...

AND THAT

- **WONDER OF WONDERS...**
 - **We...as *His* human creation...have always been the beneficiaries of *His* intentional passion to relate...**
- Listen to how *Psalm 90*...**bursts open**...with a sense of almost incredulous wonder...

WHEN

- Like the explosive 'downbeat' of a dramatic musical score...
 - *Moses* proclaims...in *Psalm 90:1-2*...

1 Lord, YOU have been OUR dwelling place...throughout all generations!
(NIV)

EVEN MORE CLEARLY

1 Lord, through all the generations...YOU have been OUR home!
(NLT)

NOT

You HAVE GIVEN US a home

BUT

You HAVE BEEN our home

*2 Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world...
from beginning to end...YOU are God!*

(NLT)

from everlasting to everlasting...YOU are God!

(NIV)

MOST LITERALLY

from vanishing point to vanishing point...YOU are God!

FROM...one vanishing point...at the beginning of time...

TO...another vanishing point...at the end of time...

YOU are God!

BY IMPLICATION

*from vanishing point to vanishing point...YOU are **OUR** God!*

APPLICATION

- *O God...our help in ages past...*
 - **We celebrate Your faithfulness...**

- All that we **are**...
- Everything we **have**...
- Anything we have **done**...
 - **Is built upon Your faithfulness...O Lord...**

- The community of faith...which we call 'home'...
- The ministries...which we share...
- The transformations...which we have seen unfold over the past 40 years...
- The facility...where we worship...
- All of that...which we call *Sturgeon Valley*...
 - **Is built upon your faithfulness...O Lord...**

- *O God...our help in ages past...*
 - *You have been faithful...*
 - *You have been good...*

AND THAT IS PRECISELY WHY

- *You are **ALSO** our hope for years to come!*

THAT IS WHY

- We join...with *Moses*...transitioning...
 - **FROM...exultant proclamation...**at the very beginning of *Psalm 90*...
 - **TO...expectant petition...**at the close of *Psalm 90*...

- Praying...*O Lord*...

*14 Satisfy us each morning with your unfailing love,
so we may sing for joy to the end of our lives.*

*16 Let us, your servants, see you work again;
let our children see your glory.*

(NLT)

17 May (Your) beauty...O the Lord our God...rest on us!

(NIV)

And make our efforts successful!

Yes, make our efforts successful!

(NLT)

BECAUSE

- *With You...we have great expectations!*

O God, our help in ages past...

YOU ARE

Our hope for years to come!

CONCLUSION

- This is a great day of **celebration...**
- This day marks an important **milestone...**
 - In the life and ministries of *Sturgeon Valley Baptist Church...*

AS

- We look back...in awe...of *God's* uncompromising faithfulness...

AND

- As we look ahead...in hope...of *His* incredible 'things' to come...

SO

- WHAT NEXT?

SPECIFICALLY

- HOW DO WE 'GET READY'?
 - FOR...the 'things to come'?
 - FOR...what we are hoping/expecting the *Lord* will do?

WELL

- The *Scriptures* record a number of similar celebrations among the people of **God...**

INCLUDING

- What we find described in *Joshua 4...*

WHERE

- We read...

THAT

- **Right after...**the **Lord** miraculously pushed back the waters of the *Jordon...*

SO THAT

- *His* people...
 - Could...move forward into the 'promised land'...
 - Could...step where they had NEVER stepped before...
 - Could...embark...with confidence...upon a new 'chapter' in their on-going journey with the **Lord...**
- **Right after that miraculous event...***Joshua*...instructed the people...

- To ‘pause’...
 - SO AS TO...build a memorial of that incredible event...
- To ‘take the time’...
 - SO AS TO...celebrate **God’s faithfulness...**

SAYING

21 In the future when your descendants ask you...

‘What do these stones mean?’

22 tell them...

24 He...the Lord your God...did this ...

WHY?

So that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is powerful

AND

So that you might always fear the LORD your God.

- There can be NO DOUBT...

THAT

- When the people of *God* are ‘on the move’...

CERTAINLY

- They must look back...in CELEBRATION...OF...our *Lord*...

BUT JUST AS CERTAINLY

- They must look ahead...in CONSECRATION...TO...our *Lord*...
- It is ESSENTIAL to discover...what we read...
 - Just ONE chapter earlier...
 - In *Joshua 3:5*...

THAT

- **BEFORE**...*Joshua* and the people of **God**...ever...
 - ‘Touched their toes’...into the river *Jordon*...
- **BEFORE**...*Joshua* and the people of **God**...
 - ‘Stepped towards’...what they were **hoping** for...
- *Joshua* pulled the people aside...instructing them...

SAYING

5. Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.

(Joshua 3:5)

(NIV)

- **In truly prophetic fashion**...*Joshua* was saying...
 - **IF**...you want to see something **amazing**...
 - **IF**...you want to be part of **something**...

- WHICH...will ‘go off the charts’ in terms of celebration...
- THEN...consecrate yourselves...
- THEN...set your lives apart...from the ordinary...
- THEN...be pure & holy...as *God Himself* is holy...

WHICH OF COURSE

- Has ALL SORTS of implications...

BECAUSE

- TO...*consecrate ourselves*...may mean...

THAT

- *We lift our eyes off of the treadmills of our day to day*...AND...look...
 - TO...*Jesus*...
 - TO...*His* vision...
 - TO...*His* passion...
 - TO...*His* agenda...
 - TO...what *He* wants accomplished...

OR

- TO...*consecrate ourselves*...may mean...

THAT

- *We...light that lamp...of the God’s Word to us...*
 - To ‘cut through’ the dark places in our lives...

THAT

- *We...open the shutters...of our hearts...*
 - To brighten those shadowed places...
 - OF...hurt...&...
 - OF...doubt...&...
 - OF...fear...&...
 - OF...sin...

AND THEN THAT

- *We...choose...*
 - TO...*deal with it*...
 - TO...*admit it*...
 - TO...*confess it*...
 - TO...*become accountable to someone...regarding it*...

SO THAT

- *We can wake up...tomorrow...*
 - *To a NEW day*...
 - *To a NEW beginning*...
 - *To some NEW possibilities*...

- *To the MIRACULOUS...*
- *To the AMAZING things the Lord wants to do...*

Consecrate yourselves...for tomorrow...

(Joshua 3:5)

(NIV)

Consecrate yourselves...for tomorrow...the LORD will do amazing things among you.

(Joshua 3:5)

(NIV)

APPLICATION

SO

- As...*He* certainly accomplished some **wonderful things** in the **past...**
 - Do you expect some **amazing things...**from the *Lord*?
- What **astounding things** do you think...*God* wants to do...NEXT...
 - In your life?
 - In this church?
 - Through this church?
 - For this city?
 - For this world...
 - In the days that we are living?
 - For as long as *He* grants us breathe...on this planet?
- Are YOU...
 - Hoping for...
 - Praying for...
 - Looking for...
 - **A miracle...tomorrow?**
- When 'things' BEGIN...
 - WITH...**consecration...**
- They inevitably END...
 - WITH...**celebration...**
- When we first...
 - **Look 'within'...**
- We can invariably declare...
 - **LOOK OUT!!**
 - **The Lord is about to do amazing things among us!**