"Giving has a way of routing out the tough old miser within us." --Richard Foster

Contemporary Comments on the Adult Sabbath School Lesson

[Title] Worship in the Psalms
[Text] Psalm 20:3; Psalm 49; Psalm 54:6; Psalm 73; Psalm 78:1-8; Psalm 90:1, 2; Psalm 100:1-5; Psalm 141:2
[Use] August 13, 2011

It's a cruel injustice. On Monday the United Nations reported that 3.7 million people in Kenya face starvation. In the past 90 days an estimated 29,000 children under the age of five have died. Twenty-nine thousand.¹

Thousands of Somalis are now taking refuge at the Dadaab refugee camp. Every day, 15,000 people wait outside the camp begging for mercy—hoping to be let inside to receive food, water and medical care. Madina Ali is one of those waiting to be admitted. Recently she gathered her five children and began the 17-day walk from her home to the camp. Only four children made it. Her two-year-old son died along the way.

Another mother lost two children on her three-month journey to the camp. “We left them exactly where they died,” she told CBS reporter Scott Pelley, “because we didn’t have the strength to carry them and we didn’t have the strength to bury them.”²

Last week, UNICEF (United Nation’s Children’s Fund) set up an emergency feeding station in Doubli, Somalia. “But by the time they get to a place like Doubli - which is a transition village, or they come to the camps in Dadaab, they are barely alive,” reported UNICEF worker Leila Abrar. For some, it’s just too late.

Such was the case for Muhumed Surow’s one-year-old daughter. Even though his family reached the refugee camp, she died from malnutrition overnight. Dozens of refugees attended her funeral as her father squatted, several yards away, sobbing. “I was not thinking of losing a child when I was coming to this country,” he said. “I was instead saying to myself that Kenya is a peaceful country. But when I came, I found a bad country, where wind blows every time. And that affected our children. The sadness you see is because of that.”³

Another father, Mayow Aden Ali buried two daughters last Friday—a six month old and a five year old. The very next day, he buried his two-year-old son.

In stark contrast, according to the American Heart Association, “Today, about one in three American kids and teens is overweight or obese, nearly triple the rate in 1963. With good reason, childhood obesity is now the No. 1 health concern among parents in the United States, topping drug abuse and smoking.”³ And according to a 2009 study, nearly 40% of the food supply in America goes to waste—and the problem is getting worse. Experts say that much of the waste is probably happening at home.⁴

While parents in one country are watching their children starve to death, parents in this country are watching their children eat too much, and waste much food. It’s a cruel injustice.

In Psalm 73, Asaph speaks of other injustices. Living his life for God didn’t seem to be paying off. The wicked were prospering while
he was suffering. And he actually even envied them for a while. It seemed as if they didn’t face struggles or carry burdens. So Asaph was discouraged and bitter, not unlike David was at times. That is, until he remembered the goodness of God. He then wrote in verse 26: “My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

When Asaph stopped looking around at all the seemingly successful people and looked up and began to worship God, he realized that he was the fortunate one. He had something far greater. He saw that God had not forsaken him—but had been there all along—holding his right hand, guiding him with counsel, and promising him Heaven.

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Additional Resource:

cbsnews

1. CBS
2. USA Today
3. Heart
4. News

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