

Date: February 3, 2010

Reading: Psalm 2 and 24

What is it that the Lord wants from us in worship? Does He desire something spectacular? It will be instructive for us to listen to His teaching from the two psalms in our reading today.

First, we should observe that He is worthy of our worship. He is greater than the kings of the earth and they plot against Him to their own hurt. Even though men desire to “break the bonds” of the Lord and His Anointed, they ultimately will bow to the King, for He is the “Lord of Glory, the Lord of hosts, and the King of Glory.”

Second, He is to be revered. The service of God is not a trivial thing to be played at half-heartedly. We need to serve Him with fear and trembling. Does this fear translate into an unwillingness to approach Him?

This question raises a third consideration. We CAN ascend into His presence and stand before Him. The way we're to do this is with “clean hands and a pure heart,” free of the deceit and the stain of idolatry (putting anyone or anything ahead of God). We must place our trust in Him and seek His face.

Who is it that we should worship? We should worship the Lord of hosts and His Son, who is King (of kings) and Lord (of lords).

Tim

Date: February 22, 2010

Reading: Psalm 38 and 51

What is your response to rebuke? Do you immediately rise up in righteous indignation and begin to cast dispersions on the one rebuking you?

Psalm 51 was a psalm of David. It was written after Nathan the prophet confronted him (“You are the man!”) because of the sin he had committed with Bathsheba and the sins subsequently committed (lying, murder) in an attempt to cover up his adultery. Remember that David was king of Israel near the height of its glory and he had effectively kept the matter “under wraps” until then. How dare this servant of the king confront him! He was under pressures that this prophet knew nothing of! Look at all the good that he had done in the service of the nation!

Self-righteous indignation is nowhere to be found in David’s demeanor as he addresses his sin. He pleads for the mercy of God and the cleansing from his sin (vs. 1-2). His sin weighed on him as it stayed ever before him (vs. 3). He didn’t blame his circumstances on others and acknowledged his sin. He also realized that sin is against God! (vs. 4)

His desire was to be cleansed (purge me, wash me, blot out my iniquities, create in me a clean heart), to be in God’s presence (don’t cast me away), to be joyful in his salvation and thus able to convert sinners, and to have God remove his guilt (vs. 10-14). He could then offer with delight the praise of God (vs. 14-15).

How could David be made right? He had committed adultery, lied to cover it up, and then ultimately had committed murder. These are heinous sins! Could sacrifice and burnt offerings make him right? No! What God desired then and now is the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart – one that is willing to respond in faith to whatever the Lord commands.

Let us offer to the Lord the sacrifice He desires! May God bless us with the attitude displayed by David, a man after His own heart.

Tim

Date: April 9, 2010

Reading: Psalm 62 and 63

The two psalms in our reading focus on two fundamental things: what God does for us and how we should respond. Note the following:

#### What God Does for Us

- Provides salvation (62:1,2,7)
- Provides our soul's foundation (62:2,6,7)
- Provides our soul's defense (62:2,6)
- Serves as a refuge (62:7)
- Provides mercy and fair judgment (62:12)
- He upholds us (63:8)

#### How We Need to Respond to God

- Wait silently for Him (62:1,5)
- Trust in Him alone (62:8)
- Seek and long for Him (63:1)
- Bless Him and praise Him (63:3-5)
- Meditate on Him (63:6)
- Follow Him closely and lean on Him (63:8)

Consider two additional observations:

- 1) Our trust needs to be in God. People in general trust in possessions. The psalmist warns that if riches increase, we should not set our heart on them (62:10). "Trust not in uncertain riches." (1 Timothy 6:17)
- 2) How is our thirst for God? The psalmist paints a vivid picture of one who longs after God in a profound way – as one who is thirsting to death in a barren desert (63:1). Jesus put it this way. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

May God bless us as we hunger and thirst for His word!

Tim

**Date: March 8, 2010**

**Reading: Psalm 73**

It was a near thing! He nearly “stumbled”!

Asaph, one of the musicians of king David’s day, had begun to notice some things about the lives of the wicked. Rather than suffer extreme punishment because of their unrighteousness, they seemed to prosper physically! They weren’t “plagued” like other men and, in fact, had all the wealth one could wish for! They acted like they owned both heaven and earth. Of course, Asaph may have over-stated the case a bit (every wicked man was doing well??), but men often judge reality on only a portion of what they see.

As he wrote in verses 3-12, the wicked not only were doing well, but they were arrogant about their misbehavior. They even suggested that God really didn’t know what was going on.

It bothered Asaph to see these things; actually it was just painful. He didn’t know how to think about what he was seeing. There he was, trying to live a godly life (vs. 13), and what good had it done him? Unlike the wicked, he was “plagued” all day long and “chastened every morning” (vs. 14).

Ever been in Asaph’s shoes? We’re trying to do the right thing and we seem to have things worse than the ones who don’t even care about godliness! Have you ever been discouraged because it just all seemed so unfair? Asaph nearly concluded, “What’s the use? Don’t worry about right and wrong!” Nearly. It was so close.

Asaph’s problem was that he wasn’t seeing the whole picture. When he finally began to look at the situation from the divine perspective (vs. 17-20), he stopped envying the wicked (who wants to end up like them??) and even was vexed with himself for ever having thought like that (vs. 21-22).

Like Asaph, we need to be looking at the whole picture. Wickedness may seem to pay its rewards now and the unrighteous may even appear to be “getting away with it,” but God will eventually punish the unrighteous. We need to “draw near to God and put our trust in the Lord God.”

God bless the reader,  
Allen

Date: March 18, 2010

Reading: Psalm 107 and 116

Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord! This sentiment is reiterated five times in Psalm 107 (vs. 1, 8,15,21,31). The psalmist gives a number of reasons for giving thanks to the Lord:

- He has redeemed us from the hand of the enemy (v. 2). This was obviously true for Israel, but also for us (Hebrews 2:14-15).
- He has delivered us out of distresses and in the right way (vs. 4-7).
- He saves us when we turn to Him in repentance (vs. 13-14).
- He provides healing to us when we turn from our iniquities (vs. 17-20).
- He saves us from trouble when we turn to Him (vs. 26-28).
- He brings down the proud and exalts the humble (vs. 33-38).

One thought from Psalm 116:

v. 15 – “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” Why is this so? It must be because then we can always be with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Let’s aim to live so that our death will be precious in the sight of the Lord.

Tim

**Date:** April 1, 2010  
**Reading:** Psalms 22 & 110

Psalms 22 and 110 are messianic. Both are written about the Lord's Anointed, but from two very different viewpoints!

Psalm 22 is the "psalm of the cross." Written by David, he was apparently relating some experience in his own life, but his words were prophetic. The psalm is written from the viewpoint of the sufferer. A large portion of Psalm 22 is addressed to the Lord. In the beginning of Psalm 22, David spoke of the trust of the fathers in God and how He had delivered them (vs. 3-5). He also wrote that he himself had trusted in God from early in his life, but he felt as though God had forsaken him. "Trouble is near" and he felt alone (vs. 11).

David's description of his suffering is eerily similar to that experienced by one who had been crucified. For example,

"all my bones are out of joint"

"My heart is like wax"

"My tongue clings to My jaws"

"They pierced My hands and My feet"

Other details of the psalm match the experience of Jesus so precisely that it is as though the psalmist was observing the crucifixion! For example, the scoffers would say, "He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him" (vs. 8). The Jews around the cross fulfilled this prophetic statement, using practically the very same words (Matthew 27:43). In similar fashion, the detail about the division of his garments by casting lots was literally fulfilled by the Roman soldiers (Matthew 27:35). Of course, the astounding thing about all of this is that David wrote about 1,000 years before the death of Jesus!

Much more of importance could be said about Psalm 22, particularly the fact that the second half of the psalm seems to indicate that the sufferer was heard by the God in whom He trusted (see verse 21 in particular).

Psalm 110 was written from a very different perspective than Psalm 22. This psalm is not written from the viewpoint of the Messiah; it contemplates the authority and rule of the Anointed One of God. He is seated at the right hand of the Lord and His rule will go forth from Zion (Jerusalem; remember that the gospel was first preached in Jerusalem and that Christ rules in the hearts of men as they submit to the teaching of the gospel; Acts 2).

Psalm 110 reveals a very important fact about the Messiah - He is not just a king; He is a priest also (110:4). Among the Israelites living under the Law of Moses, kings came from one tribe and priests came from a different tribe. As a result, no king also served as a priest with God's approval. The Hebrews author used this fact to show that the priesthood of Jesus (from the tribe of Judah) would necessitate a

new law (not just a new regulation, but a change of covenant). See Hebrews 7 for an explanation of this point.

The Jews of the first century had a hard time accepting that the Lord's Messiah would, in fact, suffer death, even the shameful death of the cross. Even the Lord's disciples had trouble accepting this truth.

The cross preceded the crown. Psalm 22 tells us of the terrible suffering endured by the Lord on the cross. Psalm 110 speaks of the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of the Father. These two psalms describe in some detail the point that Paul made to the Philippians (2:5-11; see also Acts 2:22-36).

God bless the reader,

Allen