



Biblical Literacy

Scripture • Substance • Spiritual Passion

Lesson 38.1

Old Testament Survey: Psalms - Part 1

Outline for Class

- Welcome
Our study of Psalms begins today (two parts)
- Theme Today:
The Psalms are majestic and beautiful pieces of literary accomplishment, and they appeal to the sense and mind. Yet, the real appeal that we want to find is in the way the Psalms minister to the reader, both individually and corporately.
- Prayer for Ministry To Us and Through Us
- Video (32 minutes)
- Discussion & Points for Home

Points for Home

- ❖ "I will sing to the LORD...I will sing praise to my God" (Psalm 104:33).
While we can see this passage pointing us to sing to the Lord as a personal God, it does not necessarily detail to us how to do it! Let me make a couple of suggestions. First, always look for those opportunities in worship service to sing to the Lord, not simply about him. When we have songs that are directed to God, realize that you have an opportunity to do the very thing the Psalmist longs for. Make a conscious effort to sing to God. Second, the Psalms themselves are songs. The word "Psalms" comes from the Latin title for the book (Liber Psalmorum). The Latin is related to the Greek word psalmos, which means "playing strings." It is the Greek word used by the Jewish translators of Scripture into Greek (the "Septuagint") when they were translating the Hebrew word mizmor (meaning "stringed instruments" which in the title of various Psalms. In other words, the Psalms are songs! Study and read the Psalms out loud. This is another way to "sing" to the Lord.
- ❖ "The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.'" (Ps. 110:1).
Xavier Glimm, in his notes on the letter of Saint Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (which was written roughly the same time as John's Revelation) points to this Psalm passage as a key to understanding that the early church collected Messianic statements from the Psalms and Old Testament to bear witness to Christ. On the cross Jesus cries out the opening words from Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groanings?" (Matt. 27:46; Mk 15:34). The Psalm draws to a close noting that future generations will proclaim the righteousness of the Lord and the chosen one. The Psalm promises "all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord" (v. 27). These Psalms carry a weight that goes beyond the moment of their composition. They are worthy of the church's study and prayer.
- ❖ 3. "With the merciful you show yourself merciful; with the blameless...blameless; with the purified... pure; and with the crooked...torturous" (Ps. 18:25-26).
How do you perceive God? Does God seem crooked and mean, a torturer who inflicts pain on people? Does God seem merciful as one who rescues people from the pain of the world, holding them close? God will show himself based upon the traits we are living. If we are having trouble seeing God as reflected in the life of Christ, then we need to spend time examining our own choices and actions. Let us seek his righteousness and holiness, seeking to forgive others and live at peace. As we do so, we will see God unfold his loving character to us and in us!

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