

Psalms that Stir the Soul **A Sermon in Song and Scripture**

Call to Worship: Psalm 95:1-5

Prayer:

Intro: The psalms of the OT played an important role in the worship of the early church. It could even be seen as the NT church's hymnal.

Paul urged the Colossians:

“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16–17)

Likewise James urged believers in their time of joy to sing psalms in order to express their joy:

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises. Is anyone among you sick?” (James 5:13)

The psalms can be a wonderful resource to us as well for worship and instruction. Today our sermon in song is entitled "Psalms that stir the soul." We'll be reading some of the psalms; we'll be praying some parts of them together; and we'll be singing some of them. Hopefully by taking ownership in the words of God's faithful ones of the OT, we too can be edified and blessed by these wonderful psalms.

The NT church turned to the psalms for many reasons. They turned to them for a:

Presentation of the true God

The psalms provided the early church a portrait of God. They reminded God's people of His many wonderful qualities as creator and provider of all His creatures.

THE heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; it rejoices as a strong man to run his course. Its rising is from one end of the heavens, and its circuit to the other end of them; and there is nothing hidden from its heat.” (Psalm 19:1–6)

Because all things are the creation of God, God's people were urged to see how every created thing in heaven and on earth praises Him. In Psalm 148 the psalmist wrote:

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven. (Psalm 148:13–14)

#3 Hallelujah Praise Jehovah, v. 1,2,3

In Psalm 104 the psalmist begins with the presentation of God as the creator of all things, and then describes God's gracious provision for every part of His creation:

*"He sends forth springs in the valleys; they flow between the mountains; they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they lift up their voices among the branches. He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of His works. He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the labor of man, so that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine which makes man's heart glad, so that he may make his face glisten with oil, and food which sustains man's heart. The trees of the LORD drink their fill, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted, where the birds build their nests, and the stork, whose home is the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers. He made the moon for the seasons; the sun knows the place of its setting. Thou dost appoint darkness and it becomes night, in which all the beasts of the forest prowl about. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from God. When the sun rises they withdraw, and lie down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until evening. O LORD, how many are Thy works! In wisdom Thou hast made them all; The earth is full of Thy possessions. There is the sea, great and broad, in which are swarms without number, animals both small and great. There the ships move along, and Leviathan, which Thou hast formed to sport in it. They all wait for Thee, to give them their food in due season. Thou dost give to them, they gather it up; Thou dost open Thy hand, they are satisfied with good. Thou dost hide Thy face, they are dismayed; Thou dost take away their spirit, they expire, and return to their dust. Thou dost send forth Thy Spirit, they are created; and Thou dost renew the face of the ground. Let the glory of the LORD endure forever; let the LORD be glad in His works; He looks at the earth, and it trembles; He touches the mountains, and they smoke. **I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. Let my meditation be pleasing to Him; As for me, I shall be glad in the LORD. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD!"** (Psalm 104:10-35)*

Because their God was the God of the OT, the NT church turned to the psalms for:

Praises to the Lord in times of gratitude

To think of the Lord as the creator and provider for all His living beings is to be reminded of the need to thank Him for His gracious provision for all life.

#67 For the beauty of the earth, v. 1,2

God's people could not think of His greatness without also thinking of the privilege of being His people. Psalm 100 extols the special relationship that God's people have to him.

SHOUT joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We

are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him; bless His name. For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting, and His faithfulness to all generations.” (Psalm 100:1–5)

#532 All people that on earth do dwell, v. 1,2,3,4

The psalms give us the words to express our praise for, our trust in, and our love of God.

And he said, “I LOVE Thee, O LORD, my strength.” The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.” (Psalm 18:1–3)

#359 I love the Lord, v. 1, 3 then refrain

But not only do the psalms provide the praises we can offer to God in times of blessing; they can also provide:

Prayers to the Lord in times of need

They give us the words to seek the Lord's guidance.

“Teach me Thy way, O LORD; I will walk in Thy truth; Unite my heart to fear Thy name. I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and will glorify Thy name forever. For Thy lovingkindness toward me is great, and Thou hast delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.” (Psalm 86:11–14)

#762 Teach me thy way, v. 1,4

They give us the words to seek the Lord's cleansing.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.” (Psalm 139:23–24)

#420 Cleanse me! v. 1,3

They give us the words to seek the Lord's protection.

“Thou art my hiding place; Thou dost preserve me from trouble; Thou dost surround me with songs of deliverance.” (Psalm 32:7)

#841 Hide me, v. 1,2

But can we depend upon God to do these things and many more?

Promises to assure them in times of difficulty

We have the promise that God will provide what we need.

Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” (Psalm 46:10)

#689 Be still my soul, v. 1,2,3

We have the promise that our sorrows will be turned into joy.

“Sing praise to the LORD, you His godly ones, And give thanks to His holy name. For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning. (Psalm 30:4–5)

#887 In the morning of joy, v. 1,3, then refrain

Prophecies of the Jesus as the Christ

The psalms took on new meaning to the NT church in light of the life of Jesus. They saw His sufferings depicted in the sufferings of God's servants.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. O my God, I cry by day, but Thou dost not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. Yet Thou art holy, O Thou who art enthroned upon the praises of Israel. In Thee our fathers trusted; They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. To Thee they cried out, and were delivered; In Thee they trusted, and were not disappointed. But I am a worm, and not a man, A reproach of men, and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, "Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him." Yet Thou art He who didst bring me forth from the womb; Thou didst make me trust when upon my mother's breasts. Upon Thee I was cast from birth; Thou hast been my God from my mother's womb. Be not far from me, for trouble is near; For there is none to help. Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And Thou dost lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots. But Thou, O LORD, be not far off; O Thou my help, hasten to my assistance. Deliver my soul from the sword, My only life from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth; And from the horns of the wild oxen Thou dost answer me. I will tell of Thy name to my brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise Thee." (Psalm 22:1–22, NASB)

Lord's Supper

They saw His victory over death depicted in vindication of God's righteous ones.

"I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. For Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay. Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; In Thy presence is fulness of joy; In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever." (Psalm 16:8–11, NASB)

They saw His glory depicted in the coronation of Israel's kings

"WHY are the nations in an uproar, And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand, And the rulers take counsel

together Against the LORD and against His Anointed: "Let us tear their fetters apart, And cast away their cords from us!" He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury: "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain." "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. 'Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.' " Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the LORD with reverence, And rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, lest He become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!" (Psalm 2:1-12)

Invitation

#930 *Jesus the loving shepherd, v. 1,2,3*