

PSALMS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Psalm 92 as we continue our study through the Word of God. We are told that this is “*A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath day.*” You see, the Sabbath day was a day of worship unto God and this is a song that speaks of how good it is to praise the Lord! So let’s begin reading here in Psalm 92, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

PSALM 92**VERSES 1-4**

1. The idea here as the Psalmist says that we are “**to give thanks to the LORD**” is that we are to give unrestricted acknowledgement to others about the God we serve. Our praise should be seen by others. They should hear of our love for God. And too often we make things so complicated. Everything needs to be a big production and so complicated and yet, all we need to do is to give thanks to our God. You see, the Psalmist is saying that it is good for us to thank God, to praise Him, to share with others His lovingkindness and His faithfulness. Appreciate the things that God does, even the simple things.

2. We should let people know of God's lovingkindness and His faithfulness. The best place that can be seen is in Jesus Christ. Remember what Jesus said in John 3:16-17, **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."** We see here the lovingkindness of God towards sinful man and that God would pay in full the penalty for man's sin. Did He do it? You bet He did, He completed the work that He was sent to do and thus, we see the faithfulness of God towards man who does not deserve this but God has freely extended it to man to receive by faith!

3. I also want you to get out of this the reality that there is great joy in serving the Lord, in seeing what He does in us and through us. In whatever capacity that may be, rejoice! Too often people are not satisfied in what the Lord has called them to do, they are jealous of what others are doing. That is wrong. We should be satisfied in what our God has given to us.

It is as the Psalmist said in Psalm 84:10, **"For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness."** To him, just being a doorkeeper for God would be better than having all the riches in the world and dwelling with the wicked. Never forget that.

Also, as we serve the Lord, whatever that may be, we need to do so to the best of our ability. God is looking for faithfulness as we serve and not laziness! It is as Paul said in Colossians 3:23, “**And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.**” How we serve Him brings honor to Him and we are worshiping Him as we serve Him!

4. Let me make one more point here. The Sabbath day was important for the Jew. It was a time of putting everything else aside so you can spend time with the Lord. Today we are so busy that we don't have any time for the Lord or if we do it is just a short time here and a short time there. And what you are saying is that He is not as important to you as these other things in your life! Folk's, it is the Lord who has given us all that we have and we need to take that time to worship Him and thank Him for all He has given to us, including eternal life with Him! “**It is good to give thanks to the LORD.**”

VERSES 5-9

1. Here we are going to see a comparison to someone who worships the Lord and a fool who does not understand the Lord. And yes, God's ways are great, His thoughts are very deep and only by the Spirit of God can we understand these things, but we will not be able to understand everything. We are told in Isaiah 55:8-9, “**For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' says the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.'**”

And yet, what do we so often try to do? We try to figure God out, we analyze everything and we miss the simple things that God is trying to show us. Understand this; we are never going to fully understand an all-knowing God with our finite minds. Rest in the things that He has shown you! I think that is why Jesus said that we are to have the faith of a child, one who just trusts.

2. Now the man who loves the Lord, who knows God, understands these things and the comparison is that the fool does not because he has rejected God. He is not wise to the things of God. Why is that? Because the Bible says that the natural man can not understand the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned. (I Corinthians 2:10-16). You see, the natural man is blinded to the things of the Spirit, he does not see the truths of God *UNTIL* he is saved, and God opens his eyes and removes the blindness that Satan has placed upon him.

3. The Psalmist tells us that they are blinded to their ultimate end. You see, the wicked are born, they may flourish for a time, but in time, in fact very quickly, their life will be over. Remember what Proverbs 14:12 says, “**There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.**” They think they are doing well in life, very prosperous, but the reality is they are moving towards death and eternal separation from God without Christ in their life! His success is short-lived just like the grass which springs up and then dies off!

VERSES 10-15

1. May we have this kind of passion for the Lord! The Psalmist is basically saying, “Lord, I don’t care what others are doing. I don’t care what they do. I am going to come and serve You. I am going to come to your house and sing songs of praise unto You. How can I stay away, all that I have comes from You!”

I truly believe we need that day off to come and spend with the Lord. Notice what happens as the Psalmist does, he has been “**anointed with fresh oil.**” It is the oil of the Holy Spirit being poured out in our lives as we are refreshed in the Lord. It will be a blessing to you if you do!

2. We have seen that the wicked will perish like the grass and notice the comparison to those who walk with God. Yes, God will put down the wicked and destroy them but He will also exalt the righteous and give them everlasting life. And he compares us to a palm tree, a date palm which is a fruit bearing tree and the older it gets the more fruit it produces, which is the opposite of most trees, which after a time decrease in their productivity. But we, as Christians, will bear fruit, as we abide in Him. And as we get older, we will continue to bear fruit, even more abundantly than before. Our fruit will not be stale or empty, but will be fresh and abundant.

Also, we will be like the cedars of Lebanon, which were strong, mighty. Our walk with Him will be strong. As Christians, as we get older we should not fizzle out because we have that fresh anointing of oil, that fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit in our lives and thus, we should finish strong!

3. And I like the way that he ends this Psalm, that God is our Rock, a stable force in our lives. Also, He is faithful; there is no unrighteousness in Him. We can trust Him! Thus, **“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name O Most High.”** May we not only know that but share with others the lovingkindness of God and His faithfulness!

PSALM 93

This Psalm looks to the day when the Lord will reign and His kingdom will be established. And yes He is reigning today in the hearts and lives of His people. But one day, that which is spiritual and internal will be physical and external as Jesus rules and reigns from the throne of David and then on into the eternal state where there will be a new Jerusalem, a new heavens and earth!

VERSES 1-2

1. When Jesus Christ came the first time He was not clothed with majesty, but He inhabited a body of flesh, He clothed Himself with the skin of man. But when He comes again He will be clothed with majesty and all rebellion will be broken down. He will rule and reign.

2. And we need to remember that God is sitting upon the throne in heaven and that which is now in heaven will come down to this earth and like I have said, that which is now spiritual and internal as He rules in the lives of believers today, sitting upon the throne of their hearts, will be physical and external as He rules and reigns from Jerusalem!

VERSES 3-4

1. These floods and mighty waves that make much noise are speaking of the Gentile nations that were lifting up their power, their strength against other nations, sweeping across the land with their forces and destroying their enemies, including the Jewish people. And not only fighting against others, but fighting against God and these nations think they are so strong, so powerful, that nothing can touch them, or stop them. But notice what we are told, that the Lord is mightier than all of them! What a comfort that should be to us especially in the days we are living in. Don't lose sight that as much as the unrighteous make all kinds of noise, God is mightier!

And I understand what the Psalmist is saying here and what we see. When you look at the destructive power of waves that are in the oceans, the noise they can make, and how these nations saw themselves just as these powerful and destructive waves, but when compared to God, they are nothing. He is mightier than the strongest of nations.

It is as David said in his final prayer of thanksgiving before his people in I Chronicles 29:11-12, **“Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all.”** May we not lose sight of that fact! Their rebellion against God is short-lived and His reign is eternal!

VERSE 5

1. As you look at this world it is truly evil. When you look at what is happening in many churches today it is truly evil. And yet, when Jesus comes back there will be holiness that adorns His house and this land! We see this in Isaiah 35:8, **“A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray.”**

Also in Zechariah 14:20-21 we are told, **“In that day ‘HOLINESS TO THE LORD’ shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the Lord’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.”** Holiness will fill the land!

And in Revelation 4:8 we are told, **“The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!’”**

God is holy and when He returns this land will be holy or set apart for Him.

Righteousness will fill this land!

2. Now let me close this Psalm with this thought, make this application to our lives today. When the storms of life are beating down upon you! When there is so much noise that you can't hear yourself think! When the winds are blowing you down! When all this is coming upon you, where are you going to go?

To the Lord because as the Psalmist says, His **“testimonies are very sure.”** In other words, we can trust in the promises of God found in the Word of God! It is as Paul said in Philippians 4:6-7, **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”**

We can rest in the Lord, we can trust in what He has told us because He is holy and there is no darkness in Him at all! God can't lie to us, it is not in His nature and thus, may we learn to rest in Him not only during the good times but also during the storms of life! You see, the storms, the winds, the waves, the noise may be overwhelming to us but we need to look to the Lord and trust in Him because it is in Him we will find exactly what we need!

PSALM 94

In this Psalm we see the Psalmist asking God to pour out His vengeance on the wicked, to punish them. And the whole idea is that vengeance belongs only to God, not to us, as we shall see. Now for many Christians this is a hard one to understand, that God is pouring out His vengeance on anyone, even the wicked. A. W. Pink puts this into perspective for us as he wrote,

It is sad to find so many professing Christians who appear to regard the wrath of God as something for which they need to make an apology, or at least they wish there were no such thing. . . . Others harbor the delusion that God's wrath is not consistent with His goodness, and so seek to banish it from their thoughts. . . . But God is not ashamed to make it known that vengeance and fury belong to Him. . . . The wrath of God is as much a Divine perfection as His faithfulness, power or mercy. . . . The very nature of God makes Hell as real a necessity as Heaven is.

- A. W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*, p. 75

May we not lose sight of that truth or let others cause us to doubt the righteousness, the love, the goodness of God. God has done everything possible to reach out to man without forcing man to come to Him. Man has a free will and if he refuses the free gift of life that is found in Christ, he can't blame God for the judgment that is coming upon his life. It is his choice. And because God is holy and righteous He can't allow sin into His presence. That is why Jesus came, to pay the penalty for our sins so that we can once again have fellowship with God the Father! That is truly love!

We can divide this Psalm up into two sections. The first one is found in verses 1 through 7 and the focus is the Psalmist's concern for the wickedness of man. Then, in verses 8 through 23 the focus is the confidence in the righteousness of God as He will judge the wicked. So let's take a look at what the Psalmist has to say regarding the vengeance that belongs only to God!

VERSES 1-7

1. The Psalmist is looking around and seeing the evil that fills the land, and he wants God to step in and do something about it. He wants God to show Himself strong and judge those that are evil. Like the Psalmist, I think each of us feel that same way, God **“How long will the wicked triumph?”** As you look at this world and you see the wickedness that is taking place, you long for God to do something. You see how people take advantage of others, hurt others, they are violent to others and you want it to stop and it will. God has a time when His longsuffering will come to an end, when man has reached the end and He will judge the wicked. It will be His perfect time.
2. Now you may be thinking, “Why does vengeance only belong to God?” That is a good question and the answer is really simple. It is because He alone is the righteous Judge, and thus, as He pours out His judgment, it will be perfect, it will be righteous. We, on the other hand, want to get even or hurt someone more than they hurt us and that is unrighteous judgment.

Paul put it like this in Romans 12:17-21, **“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

God will take care of things, He will right the wrongs and the wicked will not get away with anything. And think about it, before you came to Christ you were evil and yet someone loved you so much that they prayed for you and shared with you the love of Christ. Shouldn't you love your enemies that much?

3. As you look at verses 4-7 the Psalmist gives us a clear picture of the wicked. They hurt people, they come against those who are in need and take advantage of them, and they love to boast about what they have done, speak of their evilness, although I doubt if they see it as evil. And because they seem to be getting away with it, they feel that God either can't see what they are doing or He does not care, He is indifferent to their actions. Not so! God is so patient, He is longsuffering, but one day He will deal with the wicked, those who have rejected the gift of life.

It is then the boasting will end, the big talk will cease, and they will have an eternity to think about the things that they have done, the wrong decisions they have made. As Revelation 21:8 says, **“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”**

You see, some day they will have to answer to God for the things that they have done, and they will not be able to con God, trick God, deceive God with all their smooth talking, but their evil hearts will be shown to them in the light of God’s holiness, and they will be silent.

VERSES 8-11

1. It is amazing to think we can fool an all-knowing God. He knows not only our actions but our thoughts. He sees what we are doing for everything is open before Him. And the Psalmist is calling for the wicked to wise up, pay attention, to change their life or they will remain a fool, and die in their sins! This should be terrifying to those that reject God but they shut their eyes and close their ears to what God is saying. But make no mistake about it, God is watching and He is listening and He will judge them for their sins!

VERSES 12-15

1. How can we, as Christians, obtain rest as we are going through difficult times, days of adversity? By drawing close to God, allowing His Word to teach us, instruct us, comfort us. You see, God will deal with the wicked and He will bring us through these times because He loves us. It is as Deuteronomy 4:20 says, “**But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be His people, an inheritance, as you are this day.**”

Egypt is a type of the world and God has brought us up out of this world and has placed us into His kingdom. That does not mean we will not endure difficult times in this life. The difference from then to now is that we can be instructed by the Lord, learn those lessons of faith, grow in Him. Yes, one day the wicked will be dealt with, the righteous Judge will judge them and righteousness will fill this land. But until then, we must find our rest in the Lord and learn from Him as we read through His Word, as His Spirit instructs us as we live out our lives!

VERSES 16-19

1. As he sees all the wickedness around him, he is thinking to himself, “Who is going to stand up for the righteous, who is going to defend them?” And that is a great question. It is one we often struggle with in this world. And if he ended here, it may be a little discouraging, not only for him but also for us. “Who is going to help us?” But the Psalmist does not end there and here is the hope we have, “**. . . the LORD had been my help.**”

Yes, it would have been difficult, discouraging, hopeless if the Lord was not with Him. And the idea here is that the Lord was the stabilizing force in his life. It kept him focused and when he began to slip, God was there. He couldn't do it on his own; it would have wiped him out. But the comfort of God kept him going each and every day. We too need to look to God to be the stabilizing force in our life or our walk will be shaky. But God wants us to place our feet upon the solid Rock, Jesus Christ, which will never be moved!

2. With the upcoming elections I see a lot of Christians who are shaking, who are nervous what is going to happen. Did I miss something? Did God go on vacation? Was He too busy dealing with Pluto not being a planet any longer? Obviously I am being a little sarcastic here but you get the idea. He is still on the throne and we tend to put our trust in a man rather than Almighty God. Do you really think either of these men are godly men, men who fear the Lord and are serving Him? Absolutely not and thus, don't place your trust, your hope in man but remember, “**. . . the LORD had been my help.**” Never forget that or your will be shaking, you will be nervous, you will be hopeless!

VERSES 20-23

1. Not only do the wicked fill the land, but they are in the courts, passing wicked judgments, devising laws that are ungodly. They come against those that are standing up for God, and they are coming against God by calling good evil and evil good. They do evil towards the innocent.

One of the greatest travesties that has come upon our nation is the 1973 court case of Roe vs. Wade that legalized the murder of innocent children in the womb. From that point to September 10, 2012 at 9:09 am there have been 55,424,318 abortions, murders done in this country. We have legalized sin! And in this world, since 1980 until September 10th, there have been 1,267,698,000 abortions or murder. Do you see how we have legalized our sin! And we have done it with homosexuality; with all kinds of sin we want to legalize it. Why is that? Maybe because we know it is wrong and yet, if we make it a law it justifies our actions, we can find comfort in knowing the law says we can sin!

2. Make no mistake about it; God does not have fellowship with the wicked! God cannot approve of men that legalize sin! And for that matter, neither should we. We should not be in fellowship with them; they should not be our close friends because instead of lifting them up they will pull us down. I heard the story of a preacher who was confronting a man who was going into a bar to witness. And the man told the preacher that he was going in there to share his faith. I believe the man was standing on a box or something that elevated him and the preacher asked the man to pull him up. The preacher, I believe it was D. L. Moody, was a big man and obviously he could not pull him up. The point he made with this man is that he will not pull them up but they will bring him down! That is important.

If you try to justify why you are fellowshiping with unbelievers, you need to listen to what Paul said in II Corinthians 6:14-18. Now I am not saying we are not to talk with unbelievers, we are. But we are not to take counsel with them, partner with them, we are not date them! Listen to what Paul is saying here, **“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.”**

Notice that the Lord says, **“Come out”** not “Go in!” We want the world to like us but for that to happen you will have to compromise your faith! The world is not going to like you if you stand up for righteousness because light and dark do not mix!

3. Now here in verse 22 we see the Psalmist speak of the Lord defending him. Folks, we do not have to go around defending ourselves, it truly is a waste of time. It gets us doing things that are not fruitful, not building up the kingdom of God, but trying to make us look good. Dave Hunt, who has been exposing the lies that the church has been buying into, exposing the cults, the false religious systems, for years, has been attacked by mostly those in the church. Can you imagine if he went around defending himself all the time, he would never have time to warn us of the dangers that are out there, strengthening our faith. Thus, God will defend him, as God defends us, and we can continue doing the work that God has called us to do.

4. As we close out this Psalm, in spite of what some might say, God is not unfair. I know, but if He casts people into Hell that can't be right, that is not fair! God has not placed anyone in Hell, they go there by choice. By their rejection of Jesus that is what has sent them there. It is their own sins that have placed them there. God has done everything possible to save them from this punishment, but if they reject the free gift of eternal life in Christ, they have no one to blame except themselves! God will not force someone into the kingdom of God kicking and screaming all the way. You enter by your own free will. God will deal with the wicked, for vengeance does belong to God alone!

PSALM 95

This Psalm is a call to worship God, to thank Him for all He has done. It is also a warning against unbelief, and how that in unbelief, you will not enter His rest. And as you will see as we go through the next several Psalms, Psalms 95 through 100, they make up what are called the “Coronation Psalms.” Many believe that these Psalms were written for the dedication of the second Temple, the one that was built after their seventy year captivity in Babylon. And as you can see, they learned their lesson in Babylon as these Psalms seem to reaffirm their understanding that the best way for the nation to be ruled was to acknowledge God as King. That was the lesson God was teaching them in this chastening and like I have said, they seemed to have learned it. So let’s look at this Psalm of worship and you will see the enthusiasm of the Psalmist as he sings unto the Lord!

VERSES 1-5

1. If this was written for the dedication of the Temple after their return from captivity, you can understand the focus on the true and living God. In Babylon there were all kinds of gods but they now understood that there is only one true and living God that is to be worshiped, **YAHWEH!**

2. As you read through this Psalm you can just feel the excitement, a kind of celebration you might say. And that really is the idea behind Jewish worship; it was a celebration of thanksgiving and praise unto God. And that is the way worship should be. It should be joyful; it should be focused upward, unto the God of our salvation. We are truly blessed here with our worship team because as they lead us in worship you can feel that joy, the words you are singing get you focused on God. It is a celebration!

3. As much as this Psalm was for them, the Holy Spirit wants us to apply it to our lives. You see, what idol is keeping you from God? What tribulation are you coming out of? You need to get focused back on the Lord, the one who loves you and worship Him! Worship the one who created you, this temple, and more than that, He is the creator of heaven and earth!

VERSES 6-7a

1. The Psalmist is speaking of the awesomeness of God and yet He is never too busy to shepherd His people, to watch over them and care for them. The Psalmist is speaking of a life of faith, a walk that is focused upon God. And the reason we are to worship Him, the reason we are to kneel down before Him is that He is our God, He is our maker. We are His people! Imagine that! You see, when you know what kind of person you are and God says that you are His people, that should cause you to worship Him because you don't deserve it, I don't deserve it!

2. Now, in the latter part of verse 7, he is going to warn about what happens to those who are not walking by faith.

VERSES 7b-11

1. The Psalmist is speaking of the children of Israel as God brought them out of bondage in Egypt, through the Red Sea, destroying all the Egyptian soldiers. Then, in only a short time of traveling in the wilderness, they began to complain because they were thirsty. The “**rebellion**” is speaking of the waters of Meribah in Exodus chapter 17. Instead of trusting God and worshiping Him they were not trusting Him and complaining! The result of that is that their hearts were hardened towards God.

Don't miss all that God did here. You see, the problem was not that they did not have water to drink, but what they did about not having water to drink. Instead of asking God to quench their thirst, they complained, they tested God. They did not trust God.

And please understand that He just brought them out by His mighty hand, and now they did not have enough faith to ask God to supply their **BASIC NEEDS!** If they could not trust Him with their basic needs, how could they trust Him for the bigger issues, such as the giants that were in the land that God had promised them? The answer is “**They couldn't**” and they died in their unbelief! And tragically, they saw God's hand upon them and yet they still could not trust Him.

2. All that murmuring and complaining hardened their hearts and we need to be careful because that can happen to us! Think about how quickly our worshiping can turn to murmuring! Let me give you this example. On Packer's opening day there was a lot of faith, a lot of worship you might say of this team. But by the end of the game, when they lost, there was a lot of murmuring and complaining.

Now maybe that is a poor example but it does show how fickle, how easily our worship can turn to murmuring and complaining and if you do enough of it your heart will grow hard towards God! And let's face it, we don't murmur and complain when things are going well, but when they are not going well. And we don't have that faith to trust that God will provide for us, He will meet our needs, He will see us through. We refuse to walk by faith! Make no mistake about it, we have more than enough reason to rejoice and worship Him enthusiastically. Never forget that, don't lose sight of that, don't let your heart become hardened towards God.

3. And look at the result of all of this. Because they refused to trust God, because they refused to walk by faith, they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, until that generation of people, from 20 years old and up, died out. They did not enter ***HIS REST!*** The rest is a place of faith, of trust, of walking in the Spirit. Many Christians live their lives in the wilderness, not walking by faith, and in that they have not entered the Promised Land, which is a life of the Spirit. Yes, they are saved, they have been delivered from the bondage in Egypt, which is a type of the world, but they never enter that walk in the Spirit. What a lesson we need to learn. Don't murmur and complain, worship the Lord, bow down before Him, kneel before our LORD and Maker!

4. As you look at this Psalm it is interesting in the way it is developed. First of all we see a celebration for those who are walking by faith, being lead by the Spirit. Their hearts overflow with joy and praise unto God. That doesn't mean that life was easy, but they looked to the one who could give them rest. On the other hand, if you refuse to walk by faith, you will not enter His rest, and your life will not be filled with worship, because worship is an outflow of faith. The Psalmist gives us a choice and basically says, ***“Today, if you will hear His voice . . . walk by faith or you will walk by sight. Fill your life with the worship of God or you will fill your life with murmuring or complaining!”***

Murmuring is like cancer - it just begins to spread and take over. How can we keep from murmuring? What is the cure for murmuring? Worship!

PSALM 96

This Psalm speaks of us declaring God's glory and is looking forward to His coming kingdom. And think about that for a minute. Shouldn't the fact that the King is coming cause us to rejoice and praise Him? Of course it should and if it is not, then you need to check your heart and ask God why you are not looking forward to the glorious appearing of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ!

VERSES 1-3

1. One day all the earth will praise the Lord, during His reign here on earth. We obviously don't see that now, but one day the whole earth will praise the Lord, righteousness will fill this land! Can you imagine, each day you will hear and you will share that the Lord saves and the people will shout out with a new song unto their great God and Savior!

2. And yes, we don't see that today but should that stop us from sharing daily that our God saves? Of course not, we should share with others what the Lord has done in our lives, what He wants to do in their lives. We should proclaim the good news of His salvation daily. We should let them know the wonderful things that He has done! "Lord, help us to declare the wonderful things you have done in a world that needs to know You!"

VERSES 4-6

1. The reason God is to be praised is because He is God. All the other gods are nothing more than idols made from human hands out of the imagination of mans heart. Remember when the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant and brought it into the temple of their god, Dagon. This god was half fish and half man.

We are told of this in I Samuel 5:1-5, **“Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon and set it by Dagon. And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again. And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the Lord. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold; only Dagon's torso was left of it. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon's house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.”**

This is where they came up with the idea, “I have fallen and can’t keep up!” Not really but poor Dagon! I love this story; God does have a great sense of humor! The Philistines take their prize of this victory, the Ark of God back home to Ashdod, which was about 50 miles southwest of Shiloh. And they place it next to their god, Dagon, who was a half man half fish god, like I have said! Why did they do this? Because they believed that if you were victorious in battle that your god was stronger than the enemies’ god. Thus, this was a kind of trophy that was placed in the temple of their god, Dagon!

The next morning the people got up and they found Dagon flat on his face! So the people help their god back up, put him in place, maybe bolted him down this time. Why did this happen? Because every knee will bow to the true and living God and we see this false god flat on his face, bowing down you might say before the Lord!

The next day he is back on his face but he is all broken in pieces and all the kings' horses and all the kings' men couldn't put Dagon back together again! The hands and head are broken, why? Poole lets us in on the reason God did this. He wrote, "The head is the seat of wisdom; the hands, the instruments of action: both are cut off, to show that he had neither wisdom nor strength to defend himself nor his worshippers. Thus the priests, by concealing Dagon's shame before, make it more evident and infamous."

What is amazing is that the priests didn't turn to the true and living God but they prevented others from seeing the frailty, they weakness of their god. That their god, Dagon was nothing! And many do that today. They would rather stand up and glue their Dagon back together again rather than turning to the true and living God!

2. In regards to idols, we see that Isaiah speaks very clearly on what they really are. In Isaiah chapter 44, starting in verse 9 we are told, **"Those who make an image, all of them are useless, And their precious things shall not profit; They are their own witnesses; They neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed. Who would form a god or mold an image That profits him nothing? Surely all his companions would be ashamed; And the workmen, they are mere men. Let them all be gathered together, Let them stand up; Yet they shall fear, They shall be ashamed together. The blacksmith with the tongs works one in the coals, Fashions it with hammers, And works it with the strength of his arms. Even so, he is hungry, and his strength fails; He drinks no water and is faint. The craftsman stretches out his rule, He marks one out with chalk; He fashions it with a plane, He marks it out with the compass, And makes it like the figure of a man, According to the beauty of a man,**

that it may remain in the house. He cuts down cedars for himself, And takes the cypress and the oak; He secures it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a pine, and the rain nourishes it. Then it shall be for a man to burn, For he will take some of it and warm himself; Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread; Indeed he makes a god and worships it; He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it. He burns half of it in the fire; With this half he eats meat; He roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He even warms himself and says, ‘Ah! I am warm, I have seen the fire.’ And the rest of it he makes into a god, His carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, Prays to it and says, ‘Deliver me, for you are my god!’ They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand. And no one considers in his heart, Nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, ‘I have burned half of it in the fire, Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it; And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?’ He feeds on ashes; A deceived heart has turned him aside; And he cannot deliver his soul, Nor say, ‘Is there not a lie in my right hand?’” Isaiah 44:9-20.

Do you see the foolishness of man? He goes out, cuts down a tree. He uses some of it to burn to keep him warm. He uses some to cook his food. And with the rest he makes his god and worships it. He asks this god to deliver him, even though he used a portion of his god to burn in the fire, to cook his food with. If you reject the love of the truth, God will send you a strong delusion to believe a lie, and it is amazing what people believe today!

The true and living God created the heavens and the earth and these idols, they can do nothing, not even stand when they fall down. They have to be moved or carried from place to place, but our God is the one who carries us!

VERSES 7-9

1. This is speaking of the time when the Lord will set up His kingdom and righteousness will fill the land. We will come and worship before Him and give Him the glory that is due His name.

2. Now when it speaks of trembling before the Lord I believe it is because we see who we are and we see who God is! Remember in Isaiah chapter 6 when Isaiah saw the Lord and He was high and lifted up. He saw his sinfulness and the holiness of God and when he was aware of this, when he had confessed this, there was the healing, he was purified! I truly believe that as we come and worship the Lord we are reminded of our sinfulness and His holiness and it draws us closer to Him knowing that He has forgiven us of all our sins!

VERSE 10

1. Again think about what was happening in Isaiah chapter 6. He saw the Lord. He saw his sinfulness. He received cleansing and then he was sent out to proclaim the good news of God. The same is true in our lives. We need to see God in His holiness. We need to see ourselves as sinners and receive that cleansing that is only found in Christ and then we can go out into the world and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world!

VERSES 11-13

1. The whole earth is waiting for His redemption, to restore the earth back to the way it was before sin entered the picture. Paul points this out in Romans 8:22-23 when he said, **“For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”**

2. Open up the doors of your heart and let the King come in because He is coming, the King is coming to judge this world and we need to be ready, we need to look for His return. And the way to be ready is to make peace with your Maker and the only way to get right with God is through the shed blood of Christ applied to your life by faith. If you have not done that, won't you do that tonight because the King is coming!