

May 28

Scriptures: Read Psalms 98, 99 & 100

Key Verse: “Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!” (Psalm 100:1)

Overview

Psalm 98 continues with the theme of the Lord’s righteous reign, and it opens and concludes like Psalm 96. It is simply entitled “A Psalm”, but in the first verse we read that it is a “new song”, which is always a thankful expression from a heart that is inspired by the goodness of God. The Lord’s marvelous deeds and the victories He has won throughout the ages (especially Jesus’ victory over Satan at Calvary) bear witness to all the earth of His salvation. He purposely and openly revealed His righteousness and salvation so that Gentiles may also enter into the covenant with Him (Isaiah 52:10; Rom. 10:13; Acts 1:8). To the house of Israel, He has been faithful in fulfilling the promises of the covenant and sending Jesus the Messiah to bring deliverance from sin. In Him “all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God” (98:3), because He rules, reigns and judges all the world with perfect justice (98:3,9).

After remembering God’s gracious mercies and His salvation, the response of His people should be one of exuberant, joyful praise to Him with a variety of musical accompaniment which adds to the joy and celebration (Isaiah 52:9). When Christ, the sovereign King, comes to establish His Kingdom, after winning the final victory, all creation will benefit. Nature will also join in praising Him (Rom. 8:19-21).

Psalm 99 is yet another royal psalm which is dedicated to the holiness of God (99:3, 5, 9). It joyfully celebrates and prophetically anticipates the reign of Jesus Christ as Sovereign King. From the beginning of the psalm, the Lord is pictured upon His great throne, which was symbolized by the cherubim atop the Ark of the Covenant, and the Mercy Seat represented His footstool (cf. 132:7; Isa. 60:13; Lam. 2:1). It is to His throne room in the House of God that the psalmist invites God’s people to go and worship Him (99:5). This Hebrew concept, however, did not limit God, for the Ark merely represented God’s presence, and in other scriptures we see that the whole earth is considered the footstool of God (Isa. 66:1; Matt. 5:35).

From His throne on high, the Holy King establishes and executes perfect justice without showing any partiality (99:4). Even Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, who were faithful servants of God and intercessors on behalf of Israel, were judged for their sin (99:8, cf. 106:32-33; Num. 20:12-13; 1 Sam. 8:1 —5). These were great men of God who were likely selected as examples in this psalm because they appreciated the holiness of God, and God answered their reverent prayers. With equal reverence for His majesty and on the basis of His holiness, we too should exalt and worship the Lord.

Psalm 100 closes the series of royal psalms that began with Psalm 95. It is the shortest psalm in the group, but it is the most comprehensive and profound. It serves as a closing doxology which invites all nations to joyously worship the Sovereign Lord. He alone is God, and His oneness is affirmed (cf. Deut. 6:4; 1 Kings 18:39). He is also affirmed as our Creator, which is a major basis for our obligation to praise Him (100:3), but it is more than just an obligation; we serve Him

with gladness, out of the thankfulness of our hearts. The psalm praises the King of kings and Lord of lords for His continued faithfulness, goodness, and mercy. Those who love and worship Him recognize their dependence upon Him for He is their Maker. They affirm that they are His sheep who receive all they need from His pasture (cf. Isa. 43:1; Eph. 2:10; 1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:20-21).

The people of the congregation of the Lord are exhorted to come into His presence where they have the privilege of thanking, praising, and blessing His name. In closing, the psalmist gives the reasons why we should “make a joyful shout to the Lord” (100:1). Firstly, because “the Lord is good”; secondly, “His mercy is everlasting”; and thirdly, “His truth endures to all generations” (100:5). When the believer considers all these wonderful things, it gives him good reason to get excited about the Lord!

Prayer

Lord, when we consider Your greatness and majesty, our spirits soar in praise and worship to Your holy name. May the joy and excitement of serving You be evident to the world, that they too might taste of Your goodness.