

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this series about sharing from our quiet times you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Today's topic is A DISCIPLE SHARES WHAT HE LEARNS FROM THE PSALMS - part 1.

(S) **SHARING FROM SELECTED CHAPTERS FROM THE PSALMS**

This past week we have read, meditated and prayed from Psalm 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 14 and 15. Now we will use our notes to share important truths and lessons from these Psalms and discuss some difficult passages.

(T) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 1.**

An introductory Psalm about the two only ways. The writer of this poem contrasts the only two ways that people in the world can take: the way of the righteous or the way of the wicked. His unshakeable conviction is that it will go well with the righteous, but bad with the wicked.

First. The way of the righteous. Verse 1 says what the righteous person *does not do*: He does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the circle of mockers. He does not order his behaviour according to the attitudes and talk of the wicked. Instead, he keeps himself away from people who have an evil influence on others. Verse 2 says what the righteous person *does* instead. He devotes his whole personality to know God better and better. He spends his days and even nights to meditate on the things God has written in the law, that is, the whole Old Testament Bible in so far it existed. When I *meditate*, I do four practical things:

One. I think carefully about the meaning of every word and sentence and try to understand what God intended to say in the Bible.

Two. I pray asking God, not only to reveal his intention, but also how he wants me to apply the truth of the Bible to my personal life.

Three. I relate the truth of the Bible to my personal life and consider some concrete steps how to apply the truth to my personal life.

Four. I write down the most important thoughts in a notebook, so that I can remember what God has said to me. Verse 3 describes the results of a righteous person's life. The writer of this poem knows by experience that the righteous person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. He knows that a tree that stands next to a river or water channel or oases in the desert is a good tree. Such a tree sends its roots deep down to where there is always water. Every season it bears fruit and its leaves show that it is a very healthy tree. The person, who is righteous, is like such a tree. Because he sends out the roots of his life deep down to the God of the Bible and his Word that is recorded in the Bible, his life on earth will certainly be strong, fruitful and healthy. Whatever he does prospers.

Second. The way of the wicked. The wicked people belong to Israel, but do not reckon with the living God of the Bible. They make their own will the absolute norm of their life. The wicked are not necessary people who do evil things. They may live exemplary lives, but nevertheless miss God's purpose for their lives! The wicked mock the righteous, because the righteous reckon with the living God. The writer does not describe the life-style of the wicked person, but only his disastrous destiny at the final judgement. Verse 4 describes not only his useless life here on earth, but especially what will happen to the wicked at the final judgement. The wicked person is like the chaff that is blown away during the harvest. Verse 5 says that the wicked person will not be able to stand in the final judgement of God. In the present time, there is still much chaff among the corn. The righteous in the world must still bear with the wicked in their midst. But at the final judgement the wicked will be separated from the righteous and then God's people will only consist of the assembly of righteous people.

This is a picture of the new heaven and the new earth. Verse 6 summarises the contrast between the righteous and the wicked. While the righteous still live among the wicked, the Lord himself watches over the righteous with caring love, while the way of the wicked is hastening to their final doom.

(S) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 2.**

A prophetic Psalm about the King in heaven and on earth. It is quite possible that the writer took his point of departure from the prophecy in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and in 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 to reveal to the nations the future as the God of the Bible has determined it. There, the prophet Samuel said to king David, "When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor. I will set him over

my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever.” The writer describes the same reality, first from the point of view of the kings of the earth and then from the point of view of the King in heaven.

First. Verse 1-3 describes the scene on earth. Everything on earth is in turmoil. The picture is of the neighbouring nations of Israel that have been subjected under Israel and feel that they have been bearing the yoke of Israel’s God and Israel’s king too long. Now they want to throw this yoke off by making war against the people of God. The message of this picture is for all the nations on earth and their kings! All the nations on earth and their kings, who rebel against the living God of the Bible and his anointed King, Jesus Christ, must know who they are really opposing!

Second. Verse 4-6 describes the scene in heaven. While everything on earth might be in turmoil, everything in heaven is calm. The almighty God sits on the throne of the whole universe and there is never panic in heaven. The events on earth are always fully under his control. He sees what the kings of the nations are doing and how they plot against the people of God. In his great majesty, he laughs at all their human resistance against him. But then his derision turns into a terrifying series of divine acts that are described in verse 8-12. The God of the Bible is the King in heaven and he will not for ever tolerate opposition against him.

During the Old Testament period, the nation of Israel is a type of the visible people of God on earth and the kings of Israel are a type of the coming Messiah-King. The king is called ‘anointed’ because God himself chose and installed him. Psalm 2 does not simply look at the situation of God’s people during the Old Testament period. It looks forward to the situation of God’s people during the New Testament period when Jesus Christ has arrived.

Third. In verse 7-9, the Messiah-King himself speaks. In verse 7, the Messiah-King reveals the eternal plan of the God of the Bible to make him the King of all earthly kings and rulers. God himself said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.” When Jesus Christ is called ‘the Son of God’ it does not mean that Jesus Christ was *created* and it does not mean that Jesus Christ was a *physical* son of God. The term ‘Son of God’ is an adoption formula that has been used all over Western Asia. The kings of the nations claimed that their idols or gods had adopted them and that they were the direct *physical* descendants of their gods. But Jesus Christ is by the eternal decree of God the *spiritual* Son of God. From all eternity God himself had decided to take on the human nature in Jesus Christ and to install Jesus Christ as the theocratic King, not only over the people of God on earth, but also over all other people on earth. Jesus Christ would be the Ruler of the whole world forever!

Verse 8 and 9 teach that Jesus Christ may do with the nations and their kings what he wants. God the Father rules in heaven and God the Son represents God the Father on earth and rules on earth. Jesus Christ rules over the whole earth, including the rebellious nations and their rebellious political and religious leaders. On the final judgement day, Jesus Christ will ‘rule’ them with an iron sceptre, that is, he will dash all his enemies to pieces like pottery.

Fourth. In verse 10-12, the writer calls the kings of the earth to voluntarily subjection to the Messiah-King. The purpose of the Messiah-King, Jesus Christ, is not to destroy, but to save. John 3:17 says, “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” The writer calls all the political and military and religious leaders on earth to voluntarily submit to Jesus Christ and his kingship. He calls them to serve Jesus Christ joyfully and with trembling. They may be joyful when they do the will of Jesus Christ, but they should tremble when they oppose him or oppress his people.

This Psalm was written 1000 years before the Messiah-King, Jesus Christ, came to this earth to assume his reign on earth. But the writer warns that the reign of the God of the Bible was already the reality in heaven and would soon become the reality on earth as well! The reign of the God of the Bible through Jesus Christ *began* at the first coming of Jesus Christ and will be completed and become the total reality at the second coming of Jesus Christ! All the opposition of the nations and their political and religious leaders will not be able to shake the foundation of the kingdom of Jesus Christ!

(T) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 5.**

A prayer for help against the enemy.

First. The enemies of righteous people. The writer of this poem is king David. Due to many opponents, he is in great trouble. These opponents must be other Israelites, who do evil with arrogance and who tell lies and thereby plot other people’s destruction. They are called deceitful, because they create a false impression. They are not to be trusted and the words that come from their mouths pollute their hearers as much as an open grave does.

Second. The prayer of righteous people. Instead of complaining about his lot or reacting angrily against his enemies, king David prays to God. He does not *react against* his enemies, but he *reacts towards* God. Every morning he tells the Lord about his troubles and he lays his requests before God. And when he is finished praying, he does not forget what

he has prayed, but looks forward to what God is going to do that same day or in the future. He says, "I wait in expectation." He believes that the God of the Bible has heard his prayer and he expects that God is going to act!

But while he waits for God to stop his enemies, king David is not passive. He prays and he acts. He prays that God would protect him against the evil of his enemies by surrounding him with his divine presence like a great shield. And he prays that God would lead him actively to do what is right instead of what is wrong when he faces his enemies. He resists the temptation to take matters into his own hands and take revenge on his enemies. He keeps walking in God's ways even when his enemies oppose him and try to destroy him.

I follow David's example and pray for my enemies and do what is right towards my enemies.

(S) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 8.**

A song comparing God's majesty and glory with man's glory. The poet depicts the smallness of man in contrast with the greatness of God, and yet ends with the greatness of man in creation. The poet is grasped by the song of praise sung by God's whole creation.

First. God is great on earth. During the night the moon and uncountable stars, which God has set in the sky, sing their song of praise to God. And during the day the indescribable rich variety of created things on earth, like people, animals, birds and fish, sing their song of praise to God. All the created things cause the poet to sing his praise to God, "O Lord, how majestic is your name on earth!" The totality of God's great works is spread out in the whole universe and man can see it every night and every day. No matter, how great or how small the created things are, they all witness the existence and presence of the living God! Especially children are captured by the wonder and beauty of God's creation, like flowers, birds, animals and fish, and they praise the living God. Also the poet considers the greatness of God's universe: the stars are uncountable, their distances are unimaginable and their sizes are so great that half our planetary system can fit into one single star, called a blue-giant! God created all this greatness, beauty and order with his "fingers". It is as if God created the universe in a playful way with his fingers. So great is God!

Second. Man is made great on earth by God. Man is God's most wonderful creature. God created man to be *almost divine*! God created man in his own image. Man remains a creature, but can reason, speak and feel emotions like God. And God appointed man to be the ruler over all his creation. He put everything under his feet. In the world of God's creation, no one is greater than man! And yet, this Psalm is not a song of praise about man, but a song of praise about God. God made man responsible to fill the earth with people in God's image, to subdue the earth, to rule over the earth and to glorify God on earth. God crowned man with "glory", that is, to reflect God's glorious characteristics like love, holiness and righteousness on earth. Surely, man is very great, but he owes his greatness to the much greater God. God did not become poorer when he gave such glory to man. Nevertheless, not all people on earth reflect God's greatness and glory. Verse 2 says that God has enemies among the people on earth, who have turned God's purposes for man into a caricature.

Third. This Psalm finds its real fulfilment in Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 2:6-8, the writer applies Psalm 8 not to man, but to Jesus Christ. In final analysis, Jesus Christ is the Son of Man, who reveals the glory that God had intended for all men completely and perfectly.

(T) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 10.**

A prayer against the arrogance of the wicked.

First. The arrogance of wicked people. The wicked are people who cannot tolerate that other people bow down before the living God of the Bible. They bless people that are greedy and wicked like themselves. They revile the God who revealed himself in the Bible and in Jesus Christ. They do not seek God and they do not even think about God's truths in the Bible. They chase after money, power and pleasures. Their mouths are filled with curses, lies and threats. They hunt down helpless people and crush their victims with knives, guns and explosives. They are so arrogant that they dare to think that God does not see the wicked things that they are doing and that God would not call them to account on the final Judgement day!

Second. The God of the Bible helps helpless people. The God of the Bible sees what the wicked people are doing and he sees the trouble and grief of the helpless people. The God of the Bible is opposed to wicked people, but is the helper of the fatherless.

The writer of this poem believes that God is the King on earth for ever. And as King he must speak in judgement! The writer desires God to hinder the wicked people when they do wickedness. So he prays, "Break the arm of the wicked and evil man; call him to account for his wickedness". He asks God to break the power of the wicked people by which they do evil things and call them to account for the wickedness that they try to hide (15).

(S) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 14.**

A complaint against godlessness and its accompanying wickedness.

First. The false world of fools. The godless people are so stupid that they think that by denying the existence of God, they could eliminate God and his rule as King in the universe! Only a fool can pretend that there is no God!

Second. The real world of God. Even when people deny the existence of God, it does not make God vanish from reality! Even when people believe that there is no God, God is still looking at them from heaven and he sees every one of them. He sees how people do corrupt and vile things. Godlessness invariably leads to sexual immorality and every other kind of wickedness. When people deny the existence of God, even their best deeds cannot measure up to God's standard of what is really good. What people in the world regard as 'good' falls far short of being good enough to satisfy God's demand of being perfect! The apostle Paul applies this Psalm in Romans 3:10-12 to prove that all people in the world are depraved and need the righteousness of God in order to be saved.

(T) **Sharing quiet times from Psalm 15.**

God's requirements for fellowship with him. In Israel, many Jews believed that if they were *religiously pure* by keeping the ceremonial laws of purity, they could have fellowship with God. But king David teaches that *outward ceremonial purity* is not enough. The Lord demands nothing less than *inner spiritual and moral purity, which shows itself in outward social purity!* Not the things that people touch or eat make them unclean. What makes people unclean is what comes out of their heart and mouth! An inner pure person will speak the truth, will not slander other people and will keep his promises. He will not require others to pay exorbitant interest on their loans and he will not ask or give bribes in either business or legal transactions. People can only do this when they are inwardly clean. People must be born-again. Only then can people enjoy real fellowship with the living God.

(S) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Every day have a quiet time from one Psalm. The selected Psalms are Psalm 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25 and 27. Record the meditations of all your quiet times in a notebook. Once a week meet with a friend or with a house fellowship or discipleship group and share your discoveries, lessons and blessings.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and preach God's kingdom" and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".