

## God's Tabernacle Surrounded by Perpetual Praise and Thanksgiving

Call to Worship: Psalm 48

1st Scripture: 2 Samuel 6:17-19

2nd Scripture: 1 Chronicles 16

Hymn #3 (Supp)- *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

Hymn Insert- *Majesty*

Hymn #50- *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

### Introduction:

Having reverently and properly transported the ark of God, in accordance with the Mosaic ordinance, David rests it in the tent, which he has set up for it, in Jerusalem. And he offers up sacrifices of burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord, accompanied by much thanksgiving and praise. And we are told in 2 Samuel 6:18-19, "And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the Name of the Lord of Hosts. Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house."

Indeed, not unlike David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, we find David blessing the people of God, both in a spiritual and in a material sense. You see, David's love for God, inevitably spilled out in a love for God's people. This is a must for any true child of God. To love God is to love His people. And so, David proves his shepherd's heart, by blessing them in the Name of the Lord (he wishes them great spiritual and physical prosperity and wellness), and he distributes bread, meat and raisin cakes to *everyone* present!

Following this, in 2 Samuel, after the people go back to their homes, we will find David, himself, going to his own home, so as to bless his own household as well (vs. 20). But, 1st Chronicles 16, provides us with additional information, which precedes this action, and which I believe can benefit us significantly, as we ponder that which David does, as both a conclusion to this celebration, and as a means of perpetuating it, indefinitely. David sets up the Levitical choir, which is to daily sing praises before the presence of the ark of God, so that perpetual praise and thanksgiving are offered up to God, on behalf of the people. And he delivers a Psalm (given in chapter 16), over to the Levites, which is to initiate this ongoing process of surrounding the ark with thanksgiving and praise. Especially, in the content of this Psalm, I believe that we will find a helpful and instructive pattern, which can serve to guide the content of our praise.

Now, before we look at 1 Chronicles 16 (and we will do that, in more of an overview fashion), I want to just leave you with one other piece of interesting information, that might get you thinking a bit. In the last several verses of chapter 16 (vs. 37ff), you will find that David actually organizes two separate Levitical choirs, one to sing before the ark, and the other to sing before the Mosaic Tabernacle of Meeting, where all of the sacrifices continued to be offered up. What makes this interesting, is that David never reunites the Mosaic Tabernacle (and all of its furnishings) with the ark. In fact, ever since the ark was taken out of the tabernacle by Hophni and Phinehas, back when Eli was the high priest (early 1 Samuel), it has never been returned to it. And presently, the tabernacle resided on a high place in Gibeon, about five (plus) miles north of Jerusalem. And so, as the daily sacrifices were offered up there in Gibeon, David had also set up a Levitical choir, to play musical instruments, and sing praises there as well.

It is just interesting to note that David never intends to reunite the Mosaic tabernacle with the ark. Now, when Solomon is king, and the Temple is built, the ark of course, will be placed in the Most Holy Place of the Temple, but even that, is with all new furnishings (and multiples at that). The only original furnishing in the Temple of Solomon, in fact, will be the ark! I wonder, if in some way, this was not symbolic of the fact that the Mosaic Covenant itself, was temporary in nature, pointing to a coming New Covenant? Later on, I believe, following the Babylonian exile, the ark will never find its way back into the temple. It will be permanently gone, certainly indicative of the coming New Covenant worship, where God will be worshiped, not at any particular location alone, but in spirit and in truth!

### **I. A Three-Fold Focus, Inciting Worship**

Now brethren, as we span over this Psalm (verses 8-36), I want you to notice that there is a three-fold focus, which David utilizes, to incite worship. Indeed, when worship takes place, it is not to be guided by non-objective feelings and some mystical form of ecstasy. That is pagan worship. Worship is to be governed, guided and incited by important truths about God; who He is, and what He does...etc. Worship is to begin with the mind, and then it makes its way out to the feelings and emotions. The truth of God is reasonably processed, and this stirs the whole heart unto worship. The problem with much of today's worship, is that many, operating out of a principal of serving the flesh, attempt to begin by stirring the emotions, by means of music, sounds, repetitive chants, and other avenues, which do not begin with God's truth.

But notice in verse 4, how David gives us the framework, out of which true worship proceeds. And we will find this framework, mapped out throughout the course of the Psalm that he has written here. Notice, David lists three main categories, out of which, the Levites are to draw their worship of God: [Read verse 4]

1) To Commemorate: That is, to "remember" or to "recall." To remember or recall what? This is what I call, the "what" category of worship, because the people of God were to call to remembrance, the "what" actions of God, on their behalf. "What" has God done? "What" has He promised to do? "What" is He doing? The overarching emphasis, being, on recalling "What" He *has done* already, which reassures His people concerning what He is doing now and will do in the future, according to His unwavering promises.

2) To Thank: Thanksgiving is the proper response to the first category. In other words, as they recall the "whats" of God's faithful actions, they are then prompted to thank Him for His faithful actions, being assured that the past evidence confirms His faithfulness in the present and in the future. If God has done such and such already, He will certainly do this. "Thank You Lord for what you have done for us, and for what you will continue to do, in accordance with Your covenant mercy, though we are well undeserving!" [Of course, specifics would be filled in here]

3) To Praise: While praise is attached to thanksgiving in many respects, I believe that it also, especially involves the "who" category of worship. If "commemorating" speaks of recalling the "actions of God" (for which, He ought also to be praised and thanked), "praise" speaks especially of the "Person of God" Himself. "Praise" relates especially to "Who" God is, which again, is also revealed in "What" He does. Here, we especially consider God's glorious attributes; who He is, in the essence of His Person. We recall His sovereignty, His power and might, His majesty, His Holiness, His righteousness, His mercy and grace, His goodness, His unchangeability...etc, provoking us to fall down, as it were, and praise Him!

Now, let us span through portions of this Psalm, and see how David utilizes these three main "worship categories", as a guide, both for the content of the Psalm itself, and for the ministry of the Levitical choir.

### **III. To Commemorate**

Notice, the general charge, which David puts forth, calling the people of God to "remember," accompanied by specific events upon which they were to reflect:

1) Verses 8-9: "Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His Name; *Make known His deeds among the peoples* (Declare His actions; recite what He has done)! Sing to Him, sing Psalms to Him; *Talk of all His wondrous works* (Talk about the things that He has done; reflect upon them together; share these wonderful truths with others)!"

2) Verse 12: "*Remember* His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth" (Call them to mind, ponder them, reflect upon them in the present), "O seed of Israel His servant, you children of Jacob, His chosen ones!"

3) And then, more specifically, Verses 15-22: "*Remember* His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations" (recall His unchanging covenant of grace with you; reflect upon His steadfast love toward you), "the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac" (that gracious covenant promise, whereby He made you His people; consider what that means now, in your present circumstances, and let it excite you unto joy and praise), "and confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan as the allotment of your inheritance,' when you were few in number, indeed very few, and strangers in it" (Do you see where you are now, O Israel? Here we are, settled in the land! Our God had promised, when we were few and weak, and He has honored His Word! And here we are today, victorious over our enemies, because our God is faithful!), vs. 20- "When they went from one nation to another, and from one kingdom to another people, He permitted no man to do them wrong; yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, saying, 'Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm'" (Our generation today, O Israel, is living proof of the preservation power, which God has exercised toward our fathers! Let us not see our present standing in the land, as a small matter! Let us continually remember, and recall these things to mind, lest we forget, and get drowned out by present circumstances)!"

You see, brethren, there is this great emphasis on "remembering"; remembering the "whats" of God's actions on behalf of the people, upon which David centers a significant portion of this Psalm. [Read also verse 23- A day to day emphasis placed on proclaiming the good news of His salvation. And notice, this charge is given to "all the earth"]

#### **IV. To Thank**

Then, notice as well the emphasis on "giving thanks," particularly in light of the content of the Psalm (God's actions on behalf of His people, and for who He is). You will notice that the call to give thanks, lies at the bookends of the Psalm. It opens with the charge, provides the reason for that opening charge (in the body of the Psalm), and then reiterates the opening charge (at the conclusion), having supplied the motivation for it. [First, note verse 7]

1) Verse 8: "Oh, *give thanks to the Lord!* Call upon His Name; Make known His deeds among the peoples!"

2) Verses 34-35: "Oh, *give thanks to the Lord*, for He is good (How do we know this? Read the body of the Psalm, which precedes this statement)! For His mercy endures forever. And say, 'Save us, O God of our salvation; Gather us together, and deliver us from the Gentiles, *to give thanks to Your holy name*, to triumph in Your praise" (Provide us with more "remembrances" culminating in Your praise!).

And so, we have that warranted response of "thanksgiving," opening up and closing the Psalm. [Also, notice the emphasis of vs. 41, focused on God's unchanging, everlasting mercy toward His people!]

## **V. To Praise**

In light of "Who" He is, also revealed in "what" He has done, praises of exaltation and acknowledgement of His glory, fill the Psalm as well:

1) Verses 9, 10, 14, 24-27, 28-33, 36 (all).

And so, brethren, having spanned through the Psalm, we find critical traces of the three elements of "commemoration, thanksgiving, and praise," filling the whole of the song. The Levitical choir was appointed unto proclaiming these glorious realities, perpetually, daily, before the ark, and before the tabernacle. And this section concludes, where we have left off, in our main text in 2 Samuel 6:19. [Read verse 43].

## **VI. Concluding Thoughts and Applications**

Brethren, let us then close our time, by considering a few relevant, concluding thoughts and applications, in light of what we have just gone over:

1) Brethren, note again, that David's love for God, spilled out, into a love for God's people. Is this not consistent with the blessed teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose most emphasized command, prior to His death, was to "love one another?" Did He not command us to do so, with a new and proper motivation, namely, in line with the pattern found in His redemptive, unconditional love, directed toward us? Are we not seen as His disciples, when we love one another? You see, this idea of loving Christ in some mushy, emotional way, that does not manifest itself in loving His people (His church), is completely foreign to Scripture. How was Peter to prove His love to Christ, after he had denied Him three times? "Feed My sheep!"

And so, we must note that one significant sign of the converted heart; one critical sign of a heart that has been redeemed unto loving God, is a heart that loves and cherishes the people of God! One cannot possibly love God, whom He cannot see, while having no love for his brother/sister, whom he can see! David's love for God, clearly manifested itself in a love for God's people.

2) Brethren, consider both the God ordained warrant, and the great personal benefit of *daily* applying David's three-fold "worship pattern" to our life of worship.

a) The God Ordained Warrant: God calls us to worship Him in spirit and in truth. That is to say, that God desires that we worship Him in sincerity, from the heart, and in accordance with His truth. We are to thank and praise God, *intelligently*, daily. And how do we do this?

By reflecting on "what" He has promised, what He has done, what we can be certain that He is doing, and what He will do. We are called to reflect upon God's actions, as given in Scripture, as witnessed in our lives, and in accordance with what He has promised to do. And in doing so, this ought to fill us with genuine thanksgiving and praise toward God. And furthermore, under the direction of the Scriptures, we ought to reflect daily upon who God is; His attributes, His power, and the glory of each Person of the Godhead. And this ought to fill us with praise. And by these means, brethren, God is glorified. By these means, we step out of the temporal, and the cloud of what is seen, so as to behold what is eternal and glorious, though unseen! God is glorified in our worship of Him, for who He is, and all that He has done. And so, we ought daily, to be in the habit of reflecting on such things, unto the glory of God.

b) The Personal Benefit: And brethren, in doing these things; in taking time each day to reflect, to remember, to give thanks and to praise; in our glorifying God, we will also greatly benefit our own souls.

Not only will we be personally edified; not only will we be sanctified by this means; not only will we be better suited to minister to others, as we are personally recharged in Christ, but we will also be better equipped to face the trials, circumstances, and difficulties, which come our way. Being caught up in God; remembering who He is and what He has done, overflowing in the giving of thanks and praise, will enable us to rest at the eye of the whirlwind, even when everything around us falls apart.

Brethren, this type of worship is not "Sunday only" worship. This is everyday worship! Indeed, Sunday holds a unique, corporate emphasis in this regard, but we ought to carry this over into our private and familial worship lives as well. And brethren, this means making our personal fellowship with God, an absolute, daily priority! It means removing the noise; the constant flood of noise that surrounds us, in the busyness of every day life, and in the midst of the tyranny of the urgent. Some of us are regularly shaken like a leaf, by all manner of temporal things, because we do not recognize, ponder, and experience the power of God, by spending time, daily worshiping Him! David set this practice in motion, daily! And brethren, we are a kingdom of priests, daily called to proclaim the praises of Him who redeemed us out of darkness, bringing us into the light of His grace in Christ!

Is worship a regular, daily part of your life? Do you commemorate; bring to mind what God has done in history, in Christ, in you, in the church? Do you offer up regular, daily thanksgiving, in light of these things? And do you meditate upon and contemplate the glorious Being of God Himself, in all of His attributes, and offer Him heartfelt praise? If not, strive unto these ends, today! Make this an absolute priority in your life, above all else! And you will find yourself growing, persevering, rejoicing, and equipped to faithfully serve God, in the midst of a world that is crumbling around you!

AMEN!!!

Benediction: 1 Peter 2:9-10