

Sermon # 19¹

Through The Bible Series

Title: **PSALMS—GOD’S BOOK OF PRAISE**

Text: Psalm 2:11-12

Subject: *Christ in the Psalms*

Introduction:

The Book of Psalms is the largest Book in the Word of God. It is a Book about the worship of God. The word “psalms” means praises.” The Book of Psalms is “the Book of Praises.” It is God’s Book of Praise. That which is essential in the praise of God is dominate in these 150 psalms—Worship.” “Worship” means "prostration." To worship and praise the Lord our God is to prostrate ourselves before him, taking our place in the dust before him as we acknowledge and adore his supremacy, perfection and work. This is where we will begin. After describing Christ as the perfect man in Psalm 1 and declaring him to be the exalted King in Psalm 2, we are called to worship him in Psalm 2:11-12.

(Psalms 2:11-12) "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. {12} Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him."

WORSHIP

The Book of Psalms teaches us to worship our God, to ever be occupied with him. Just in proportion as our hearts and minds are occupied with Christ, we worship him (Col. 3:1-3). Here we are taught to...

- Treasure his Word,
- Delight in his providence,
- Remember his works,
- Speak of his greatness,
- Trust his care,
- Glory in his gospel,
- And celebrate his praise continually.

We are here taught to find strength for life's labors, comfort for life's troubles, and solace in life's sorrows by continually prostrating ourselves before the throne of grace, seeking mercy and grace from our great God in time of need.

In this Book we have 150 psalms, or songs, of praise to our great God. As we read these psalms, our hearts often echo the words we are reading, because that which we read here expresses our own feelings, emotions, and experiences as God's people in this world. These inspired psalms express our own doubts and fears, joys and sorrows, sufferings and aspirations, burdens and blessings, as we attempt to worship and serve our God.

Yet, this is a Book of praise to our God. If you read the psalms carefully, you cannot avoid noticing the fact that each of the psalms that begin with an expression of sorrow or despondency end with praise to God for his goodness. That is because our sorrows, like our joys, are designed by our God to show us his goodness and bring his goodness to us.

There is one exception. Psalm 88, perhaps the oldest of the psalms, is all sorrow. That psalm reveals the inmost sorrow of our Savior as he suffered the wrath of God for

us. When he was made to be sin, when he was made to be the object of God's unmitigated wrath as our Substitute, he found nothing to comfort him.

AUTHORSHIP

The New Testament contains two hundred and forty-three quotations from the Old and one hundred and sixteen of these are from the Book of Psalms. These 150 psalms were written over a period spanning 900 years. Most of the them were written by David, "*the sweet singer of Israel.*" One was written by Moses (Psalm 90). One was written by Heman (Psalm 88). One was written by Ethan (Psalm 89). Two were written by Solomon (Psalms 72 and 157). The descendants of Korah wrote ten. And Asaph, the chief musician in David's choir, wrote twelve. There are fifty of the psalms to which no author's name is attached. But it is certain that David wrote some of these (Compare Psalm 2:1 and Acts 4:25).

DIVISIONS

The psalms have been divided into four categories Each section ends with "*amen*" or "*hallelujah.*"

- Psalms 1-41: Davidic Psalms
- Psalms 42-72: Levitical Psalms
- Psalms 73-89: Psalms of the Time of Hezekiah
- Psalms 90-106: Psalms Before the Captivity
- Psalms 107-150: Psalms After the Captivity

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Be sure you understand this:—Though, as I will show you, the psalms speak of Christ, they also are true expressions of the personal emotions, feelings, and experiences of those who wrote them. When David wrote, “*My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?*” He was, without question, speaking prophetically of Christ. But he was also expressing his own soul’s lamentation before God.

Because the psalms are honest expressions of believing hearts in all the varied experiences of life in this world, they speak the universal language of our souls. Whatever our state and condition may be spiritually, we will find it put into words in the Psalms.

CHRIST

Yet, it is a mistake to interpret the psalms only in a historic way, applying the words of the psalms to mere men. The One of whom the psalms speak is the Lord Jesus Christ himself, our great God and Savior.

As “*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev. 19:10), the testimony of Christ is the spirit of the psalms. The Psalms speak of the incarnation of Christ, the deity of Christ, the eternal Sonship of Christ, the offices of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King, the betrayal of Christ, the agony of Christ, the trial of Christ, the rejection of Christ, the crucifixion of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the ascension of Christ, and the second coming of Christ to judge the world.

- They tell us of holiness of heart and life, and of Christ the one perfectly holy man in the history of the world.
- The Psalms tell us much of the blessedness of righteousness, and of Christ the only righteous man who ever lived.
- The Psalms tell us often of the enemies of the righteous, and of Christ who was ever encompassed with enemies who hated him without a cause.
- The Psalms tell us of the punishment of the wicked, and of Christ the Judge of all.
- The Lord Jesus Christ is set forth in the Psalms as the Covenant God of his true Israel.

The Gospels tell us about the kingdom of God. The Psalms tell us much about the King. God the Father appointed his Son to be King in Zion; and he shall rule the nations with a rod of iron. David with his throne on Zion is the chosen type of Christ Who rules from heaven as David ruled on earth. *“For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the Governor among the nations.” “Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also; and him that hath no helper.”*

The Gospels are a record of the history of our Lord's outer life in this world, his incarnation, his family, his works, his doctrine, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, and his exaltation. The psalms are a record of our Savior's inmost Being, the feelings, passions, and experiences of his very heart and soul, the feelings, passions, and experiences of the heart and soul of him who was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin, that he might be our merciful and faithful High Priest,

interceding as One who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

MESSIANIC PSALMS

Commonly, specific psalms are referred to as “messianic psalms.” But that is a mistake, because it implies that some of the psalms are not messianic, that some of them do not speak specifically of our Savior (“*In the Psalms concerning me.*” Luke 24). In these blessed, inspired songs of praise to our all-glorious Christ, we see him in all his offices, in all his works, and in all his accomplishments as Savior and Lord. He is the Redeemer, the Rock, the Refuge, the Shepherd, the Shield, the Fortress, the High Tower of his people. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness around which the whole Psalter revolves. Behold, here is Christ!

- Our Good **Shepherd** (Ps. 23; 77:20; 78:70-72; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3; 119:176).
- The **Rock** of our Salvation (Ps. 27:5; 28:1; 31:2-3; 40:2; 61:2-3; 62:2-9; 71:3; 78:20; 89:26; 94:22; 115:1).
- The **Light** of the World (Ps. 27:1; 43:3; 118:27).
- Our Great **Redeemer** (Ps. 19:14; 69:18; 72:14; 77:15; 78:35; 103:4; 106:10; 107:2; 119:154).
- The One in Whom and by Whom we have **forgiveness** (Ps. 32; 51; 130).

PENITENTIAL PSALMS

Indeed, there is not a single psalm in this Book that can be applied only to the man who wrote it in the fullest extent of its meaning. Even those psalms referred to as

“Penitential Psalms” are best understood, and most properly understood, when we read them as the words of our great Substitute and Sin-Bearer, the Lord Jesus Christ, when he was made to be sin for us. As Ezra, Daniel, and Nehemiah confessed the sins of Israel as their own sins, though they were not personally guilty of the crimes they confessed, our great Sin-Bearer took our sins to be his own and confessed them as such. He who bore our sins in his own body on the tree is alone the sacrifice God accepts, finds pleasure in, and upon which he builds his church and blesses his people (Ps. 51:17-19).

(Psalms 51:17-19) "The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. {18} Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. {19} Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

Psalm 1—Christ is set before us as the perfect, holy, blessed man, who delights always in God and his will, who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly. He alone is that Man of whom it can be said, absolutely, “*whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*” The pleasure of the Lord prospers in his hand (Isa. 53:12).

Psalm 2—Christ, the Son of God, is depicted as the appointed Ruler, the King of kings. “*I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee*” (v.7).

Psalm 8—Here we see the Son of God becoming the Son of man in order that we might be made the sons of God.

(Psalms 8:4-5) "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? {5} For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."

(Hebrews 2:6-8) "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? {7} Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: {8} Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."

(Hebrews 2:9-18) "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. {10} For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. {11} For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, {12} Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. {13} And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. {14} Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the

same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; {15} And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. {16} For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels*; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. {17} Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. {18} For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

Psalm 16—Christ's deliverance from death is prophesied here. Verses 10 and 11 find their fulfillment in the death and resurrection of our Lord. Peter quoted these words on the day of Pentecost, showing that David was a prophet (Acts 2:25-28).

Psalms 22-24—These songs are examples of divine inspiration in the arrangement of the Psalms. They are filled with Messianic teaching about the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus. We shall return to these psalms shortly.

Psalm 40—Hebrews 10 tells us that this psalm speaks of Christ's coming to redeem and save his people.

Psalm 45—Christ is the King who is fairer than the children of men, into whose lips grace has been poured, whom God has blessed forever, the most mighty One who has girded on his sword, riding with glory and majesty, prospering because of his truth, meekness and righteousness. It is of him alone that we sing—"Thy

throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace" (vv. 6-15).

Psalm 68—Christ is the Lord God our Savior who has risen to scatter his enemies (vv. 17-20; Eph. 4:8-11).

(Psalms 68:17-20) "The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them, *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*. (18) Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*. (19) Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the God of our salvation. Selah. (20) *He that is* our

God *is* the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death."

(Ephesians 4:8-11) "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (9) (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? (10) He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) (11) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"

Psalm 69—The humiliation of Christ is shown in verses 4, 8, 9, 12, and 21. The words used here find their fulfillment only in our Redeemer.

(Psalms 69:4-9) "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away. {5} O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. {6} Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. {7} Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. {8} I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. {9} For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

(Psalms 69:21) "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

(Matthew 13:55-56) "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? {56} And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?"

(Matthew 27:33-34) "And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, {34} They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink."

(John 2:17) "And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

(Romans 15:3) "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

Psalm 110—Christ is our omnipotent Savior King and everlasting Priest, who makes his people wiling in the day of his power (vv. 1-4).

(Psalms 110:1-4) "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (2) The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. (3) Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. (4) The LORD

hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Psalm 118—This psalm is part of the special passage that was used as a prayer on passover night. It more than likely was sung by the Lord and His disciples at the Lord's Supper, as recorded in (Matt. 26:30).

(Psalms 118:22) "The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner."

Behold, Christ is here (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17).

Psalm 121—Christ our Help, our Strength, our Keeper!

THE SHEPHERD PSALMS

Psalms 22-24 speak specifically of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Shepherd. Psalm 22 brings us to "*the place called Calvary.*" In its light we stand at the foot of the cross. Here and in Isaiah 53 the crucifixion is portrayed more clearly than in any other part of the Old Testament. Isaiah 53 speaks primarily of the sin-atonement aspect of Christ's death. Psalm 22 speaks of his sufferings. It begins with the cry uttered by our Lord in the hour of darkness, "*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" It closes with the words "*He hath done it,*" or "*It is finished,*" as it stands in the original Hebrew, identical with almost the last cry of our Savior. It is a Psalm of shame, sorrow, and sighing. In the original language there is not a single completed sentence in the opening verses, but a series of short ejaculations, like the gasps of a dying man whose

breath and strength are failing, and who can only utter a word or two at a time.

Read Psalms 22 and 69 together, and you will see a tremendous, instructive, prophetic picture of our Redeemer's sufferings. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John specially and repeatedly call our attention to it. *"I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."* *"All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip"* (22:6, 7). *"The rulers derided Him."* *"The soldiers also mocked Him"* (Lk. 23:35, 36). *"They shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him"* (verse 8). *"They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said...He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him"* (Matt. 27:39, 41, 43). *"Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths"* (verses 12, 13). *"Sitting down, they watched him there. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth"* (Matt. 27:36, 44).

"They pierced my hands and my feet." *"All my bones are out of joint"* (vv. 16 and 14). The Roman method of death by crucifixion, unknown to Jewish law, is prophesied here. The very action of the soldiers is given in the words, *"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture"* (v. 18). *"My tongue cleaveth to my jaws"* (v. 15). *"In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink"* (Ps. 69:21). *"Jesus...that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. And they filled a sponge with*

vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth” (John 19:28, 29).

A BROKEN HEART

“I am poured out like water: My heart is like wax; it is melted” (22:14). *“Reproach hath broken my heart”* (Ps. 69:20). Here we are told the immediate cause of our Savior’s death. He died of a broken heart. Six times in Psalm 69 the word *“reproach”* appears—reproach and shame and dishonor borne for others. The bearing of our sins, the hiding of his Father’s face on account of it, was what broke his heart.

“Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent” (Matt. 27:50, 51). When the soldiers came to break the legs of those that hung upon the cross, they found that the Lord Jesus was dead already, and broke not his legs. *“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.”*

“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.” By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God he was delivered to death. By wicked hands he was crucified and slain. By his own will he laid down his life.

Surely, as I mentioned before, we have in Psalm 51 not merely the cry of the penitent sinner, but a prophecy of Christ, the Sacrifice of God. "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise*" (51:17). The great sacrifice of God is a broken heart. This was the sacrifice our Savior offered for us. He clothed himself in a human body that he might have it to offer (Heb. 10:5, 9, 10). He became possessed of a human heart that it might be broken. The way into the holiest is opened up for us through the broken heart of God's own darling Son, our all-glorious Savior. This is the sinner's Savior, the sinner's hope, the sinner's gospel.

The New Testament refers to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ as that of a shepherd in three distinct ways. They correspond to Psalms 22, 23, and 24, which present three aspects of our Lord's ministry on earth.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

In Psalm 22 we see our Savior as the good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep. He said, "*I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep*" (John 10:11). In the Gospels we read of what he said and did, and what was done to him; in Psalm 22 we are allowed to discover, as well as sinful creatures can discover, what he felt.

The latter part of the psalm (vv. 22-31) is marked by a jubilation that portrays the glory of the salvation obtained by the efficacious merit of his blood. Though the resurrection is not specifically mentioned, we see Christ

delivered and his people delivered as well. “A seed shall serve him; it shall be counted to the LORD for a generation. They shall come and declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this”(vv. 30-31). Psalm 22 is the crucifixion psalm. The Good Shepherd has given His life for the sheep.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD

What tender emotions and thoughts of praise fill our hearts as we read Psalm 23! This is not a song about a dying or a dead shepherd, but of a risen, living, reigning Shepherd. It is in the present tense; it speaks of today. Christ arose from the dead to be our Great Shepherd. *"Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant"* (Heb. 13:20).

Because my good Shepherd laid down his life for me, I shall never die. Because Christ my great Shepherd sits upon the throne of the universe, *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever!"*

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

Psalm 24 speaks of Christ as the chief Shepherd, who shall bring us with him into his glory, the glory he earned and purchased as our Substitute, the glory he gave us (John 17:5, 22), the glory he holds for us as our Forerunner in heaven (Heb. 6:20). The apostle Peter

wrote, "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4).

Listen! Someone is coming! Who is it? Christ, the King of Glory! He is coming to bring his chosen, ransomed people into his kingdom and glory. "*Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation*" (vv. 3-5). **That is Christ. But these words do not speak of Christ alone.** He did not enter and does not stand in the holy place by himself. He entered in for us. He stands there with us. And we shall stand there with him in all the perfection of his glory as our Mediator and Substitute. Verse 6 tells us plainly that these words refer just as fully to us, the people he came here to save, as they do to him. "*This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.*" Pause a while and think about that!

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Readings: *Lindsay Campbell & David Burge*