

A Warning to God's People Concerning Worship

Psalm 50 (Page 413 in the BPB)

July 17, 2022

Don White

Introduction

A Psalm of Asaph

Named among the Levitical singers and instrumentalists (1Chr. 15:16-17; 16:5, 7). Head of a Levitical choir (1 Chr. 25:1, 2, 6; 2 Chr. 5:12); a composer of songs (2 Chr. 29:30). See Psalms 73-83.

I. God's Court Is in Session (1-6)

A. The Judge

"The Mighty One (El), God (Elohim), the LORD (Yahweh)" (1a)

"God Himself is judge" (4b, 6)

El – "describes God in His transcendent majesty" (Motyer); "denoting God's greatness or superiority over all other gods" (TWOT, vol.1).

Elohim – "God in the completeness of the divine attributes, a plural of amplitude" (Motyer). "When indicating the true God, Elohim functions as the subject of all true reverence and fear from men."

Yahweh – God's name

Joshua 22:22 "The Mighty One, God, the LORD, the Mighty One, God, the LORD! (Used as an oath, calling God as witness, to the motives of the Transjordan tribes construction of an altar.)

B. The Setting (2-3)

“Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth...Fire devours before Him, and it is very tempestuous around Him”

Similar to the setting at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:14-20; Heb. 12:18-21)

C. The Summons (1b, 4)

To the earth (1b, 4b) and to the heavens (4a) to witness and to gather the defendants.

Isa. 1:2 “Listen, O heavens and hear, O earth; for the LORD speaks....”

D. The Defendants

“His people” (4b); “My godly ones” (5a); “Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice” (5b); “Hear, O My people...O Israel”

E. The Key Witness & Plaintiff

God

“The heavens declare His righteousness” (6)

“I will speak; I will testify against you.’ (7a, b)

“I am God, your God” (7c)

II. The First Charge Concerns Formalism (7-15)

The first charge is against the covenant people whose understanding of the purpose for sacrifices and offerings in worship is wrong.

It wasn't that they were neglecting to offer sacrifices to God. (8)

"I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, and your burnt offerings are continually before Me."

They thought they were actually giving to God something that he lacked or needed. (9-12)

⁹"I shall take no young bull out of **your house**
Nor male goats out of **your folds**.

But God reminds that everything is His. (Acts 17:24-28)

¹⁰"For every beast of the forest is **Mine**,
The cattle on a thousand hills.

¹¹"I know every bird of the mountains,
And everything that moves in the field is **Mine**.

¹²"If I were hungry I would not tell you,
For the world is **Mine**, and all it contains.

It seems that they also had mixed pagan thought with their understanding of God. He is not like the false gods of the nations. (12-13)

¹³"Shall I eat the flesh of bulls
Or drink the blood of male goats?

God's Instruction to correct faulty worship. (14-15)

¹⁴“Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving
And pay your vows to the Most High;

¹⁵Call upon Me in the day of trouble;
I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.”

III. The Second Charge Concerns Hypocrisy (16-21)

The 2nd charge is against some who would claim to be part of God's covenant people but they are “wicked”. (16-21)

¹⁶But to the wicked God says,
“What right have you to tell of My statutes
And to take My covenant in your mouth?

¹⁷“For you hate discipline,
And you cast My words behind you.
¹⁸“When you see a thief, you are pleased with him,
And you associate with adulterers.
¹⁹“You let your mouth loose in evil
And your tongue frames deceit.
²⁰“You sit and speak against your brother;
You slander your own mother's son.

God's patience was mistaken for approval.

²¹"These things you have done and I kept silence;
You thought that I was just like you;

I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes.

2 Peter 3:9

IV. Warning & Promise (22-23)

²²"Now consider this, you who forget God,
Or I will tear you in pieces, and there will be none to deliver.

²³"He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me;
And to him who orders his way aright
I shall show the salvation of God.

Application:

What would God's about our worship?

John 4:23-24

"True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth."

Hypocrisy

Matthew 15:7-9

1 Samuel 15:

Matthew 7:21-23