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David's Gospel Sermon

Psalm 22, 23, 24

Those around the capitol and politics are quite familiar with the excitement involved in the visit of a national leader or dignitary. Crowds gather with a sense of anticipation. Many special preparations are made. Several years ago the president of the United States made plans to visit a church here in the area on a Sunday morning. Though it was supposed be kept quiet, word leaked out and there was much expectancy of his visit. The Secret Service came the night before to arrange security. I'm sure the pastor reviewed his message carefully, considering what he might say with the President in the congregation. Unfortunately, travel problems delayed the President's arrival and he was not able to attend. But there was no doubt great excitement and anticipation his potential visit occasioned. Throughout the Old Testament we have the announcement of the "visit" of One greater than any human leader - that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Nowhere is that announcement clearer than in the Psalms of David. In Psalms 22, 23, and 24 we have a clear presentation of David's gospel message of our suffering Savior, our Good Shepherd, and our coming King.

This session we have been studying the life of David. We can learn much from him about what it means to be "**one after God's own heart**". We learn about love for God and His Word. We understand better what it means to have faith and trust in God. We see an example of courage and boldness. Our minds and our hearts are directed towards God through his songs and poems. As we close our study there is another aspect of David's writings for us to consider. David's Psalms preach to us a wonderful gospel message about Jesus Christ.

The New Testament tells us that David was not only a king but a prophet who wrote concerning the coming of Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:30). The New Testament quotes often from the Psalms. Several Psalms are considered "Messianic Psalms" (referring to the Messiah). There are Psalms that refer directly to Christ. Others speak of events experiences in David's life but speak to us in a type or picture of Jesus.

The clearest gospel message we find in the Psalms is in chapters 22-24. Whether these Psalms were written to go together or were later arranged this way, we cannot be sure. But in

these three Psalms we David's clearest gospel sermon regarding our Savior and Lord.

Psalm 22 – The Suffering Savior

In Psalm 22 David gives us a vivid picture of our suffering Savior, amazingly written over 1,000 years before the coming of Christ. Consider carefully David's description of the suffering and death of Christ:

*¹⁴ I am poured out like water,
And all my bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
It is melted within me.*

*¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
And my tongue cleaves to my jaws;
And You lay me in the dust of death.*

*¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded me; A band of
evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced
my hands and my feet.*

*¹⁷ I can count all my bones.
They look, they stare at me;*

*¹⁸ They divide my garments among them,
And for my clothing they cast lots.*

When we read the accounts of Christ's crucifixion in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19, we cannot but help see how accurately these words described Christ's crucifixion.

Psalm 23 – The Good Shepherd

These are some of the most familiar and comforting words of scripture:

*¹The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
²He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside quiet waters.
³He restores my soul;
He guides me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.*

Jesus makes it clear these words were referring to Himself, **“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”** (John 10:11).

Something we may not have considered about this Psalm is that is typical in giving us a picture of that which Christ Himself endured. Imagine Christ praying this prayer and we see how indeed this points to what He experienced. He depended upon God. He was led by God as He sought to do His will. He certainly walked through the valley of the shadow of death (vs. 4). The Psalms help direct our response to God in times of trial and suffering. However seeing Christ in the Psalms this way will help us better understand the suffering He endured on our behalf, something we do not see as clearly in the gospels alone.

Psalm 24 – The Coming King

Listen to these joyous, victorious words:

*⁷Lift up your heads, O gates,
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
That the King of glory may come in!
⁸Who is the King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in battle.
⁹Lift up your heads, O gates,
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
That the King of glory may come in!
¹⁰Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
He is the King of glory.*

This describes the day when Jesus comes to rule completely over all the earth. David's reign was a faint picture of the coming King of Kings. David failed, and his descendants failed. But God promised David a descendant who would succeed in faithfully following God and keeping His word.

This One would then rightfully rule and reign forever.

There is an important question and answer back in verses 3-4:

Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully.

Who has clean hands and a pure heart? No one but Christ. So how can we who have all sinned ever come into the presence of a holy God? Only through Christ, the one with clean hands and a pure heart yet who suffered and died for us.

Taken together, these Psalms give us a great gospel message regarding what Christ would do (has done) for us. He is the suffering Savior who took our sin upon Himself and died for us. He rose again and now lives to lead, guide and protect us. One day He will come to rule and reign and will bring his sheep safely home into His presence. This is what Jesus spoke of to the disciples on the road to Emmaus: **“O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures**” (Luke 24:25-27). While we cannot know for sure, it could well have been these very Psalms to which Jesus referred His discouraged followers that day.

What Does This Mean to Us?

In these three Psalms David preaches to us a wonderful gospel message of what Christ has done and will do for us. These Psalms will help us fix our gaze upon the excellencies of Christ, upon the one who through His suffering will rule and reign over all things. We may likewise suffer for time, but if we have repented and trusted Him, His goodness and lovingkindness will follow us, and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever!

BIBLE STUDIES

Lobbyists / Staff: Tuesdays, 12:00 Noon

Legislators / Elected Officials: Thursdays, 8 AM; 12:00

TREASURER 'S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)