

THE GREATNESS OF GOD

Scripture passages: Psa. 48:1; 96:4 (cf. 1 Chron. 16:25);
Psa. 145:3.

Intro: Many of us have just finished reading through the Psalms. If you have, you doubtless have fresh in your mind and upon your heart the great wealth of truth that is found in the Psalms. A man could devote his entire life to the Psalms and yet never be able to comprehend it all nor put it down in a proper theology.

Perhaps one of the greatest reasons the people of God love the Psalms is because they find themselves in the Psalms. There surely is not an experience which we can have but what we find its parallel in the Psalms. It encourages us to see that others have experienced what we are going through, and we can see also how they prayed and what the Lord did for them in answer to prayer.

But this is not the real reason for the greatness of the Psalms -- the reason that they bring such blessing to our hearts, and the reason that they have come to us as a part of the Word of God. The real reason is that they teach us about God, and make us worshippers of Him.

Even among those of us who know the Lord, would we not have to confess that we have lost much of that sense of the greatness of God that we once had? It certainly does not seem to be predominant in the Church. Perhaps most of us have never had it. Consequently, there are many other things that we lose too: the blessing that comes from worship, the peace that fills our hearts when we have been in His presence, the joy that is evident in our lives even when our circumstances may not be what we wish they were.

These are some of the things that you find in the Psalms.

The very size of the book is evidence of its importance. We need to read it much more than just once a year. It probably would bring blessings like we have never seen before if all of us were reading at least one Psalm a day (and more if possible) in addition to all of the other reading that we are doing. We need the Psalms. They will revolutionize our relationship with God.

One thing that I have been seeing over and over again in the Psalms is the many references to the greatness of God. To announce that you are going to bring a message on this is like trying to cover the whole Bible in one message.

Obviously it cannot be done because this would require a study of all 150 Psalms! But I want you to see it tonight. We may look at other facets of it later.

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT GOD IS GREAT?

By definition it means that:

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| 1) God is above all. | GREAT IN: |
| 2) God is more important than all. | 1) HIS LOVE. |
| 3) God is more vast as to His Person. | 2) HIS WISDOM. |
| 4) God is mightier than all. | 3) HIS MERCY. |
| 5) God is eternal -- He is older than all. | 4) HIS GRACE. |
| | 5) HIS POWER. |

It is a subject so great that the Psalmist is compelled to say,

"His greatness is unsearchable."

That means that you and I will never be able to understand fully this marvelous subject of the greatness of God -- but we ought to be moving in that direction!

Thus, our understanding of God's greatness = our understanding of Him!

II. SOME OF THE PSALMS WHICH TEACH THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

A. Psalm 8.

B. Psalm 19:1-6.

C. Psalm 23, esp. v. 4.

D. Psalm 27:1-6.

This is what prepared
Isaiah for the ministry
God had for him. Cf. Isa. 6.

E. Psalm 46.

III. A TRILOGY ON THE GREATNESS OF GOD -- AND THE REASONS BEHIND EACH.

Three times in the Psalms we find this statement:

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised."

You find this in:

- 1) Psa. 48:1.
- 2) Psa. 96:4 (quoted also in 1 Chron. 16:25 when the ark of the covenant was brought to Jerusalem during David's time).
- 3) Psa. 145:3.

The statement tells us what the Lord "is," and what we are to do about it once we realize the facts and the reasons behind them.

Each Psalm gives us a different reason for making this statement, i.e., recognizing the greatness of God. Let

- A. Psa. 48 -- because God protects His people.

Here it is illustrated by the way the Lord had promised to preserve Israel against all of her enemies.

Remember Psa. 121 in this connection.

- B. Psa. 96 -- because He reigns over all the nations and is coming to judge them.

This is a good Psalm to read when you get the news each day. It is only when we understand this that we can properly appreciate the outcome of things.

- C. Psa. 145 -- because He provides for His own, and also "of every living thing." See v. 16.

Note esp. vv. 8, 9, 17-20. The result! See v. 21.

Concl: Think of what it could mean to you spiritually to dwell on truths like these. Is this possibly the meaning of Psalm 1:2, 3, and the reason that it comes first in the Psalms?

The Word (and this is especially true of the Psalms) was given to reveal God to us -- as the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Redeemer. The more I see of Him in the Word, the more I will love Him and trust Him and worship Him. And the more I know of Him, the greater will be my realization of my need of Him.

And then this will be true also: As we live in His presence, the Spirit of God will be creating in the hearts of others to have what we have.

In these days when so many claim to be able to give you "sudden spirituality," remember that God's way is still the same -- reading the Word, understanding it, obeying it. Only then will life become what we want it to be and what the Lord intends that it shall be.