

PSALM FORTY-SIX, TEN

Intro: Many expositors feel that our text tonight is addressed primarily to the Gentile nations. If so, we certainly cannot give it exclusively to the Gentiles. The same exhortation is given to the people of God in Psa. 100:3, "Know ye that the Lord, he is God . . ."

But, granting that it is primarily for the Gentiles, let us note that there are two parts to the verse:

- 1) A command (which comes also as divine counsel).
- 2) A promise (which comes as a prophecy).

I. THE COMMAND: "Be still, and know that I am God."

The Psalm speaks of turmoil and trouble for the people of God in Israel. And this is caused by men. They persist in spite of their failure to accomplish what they are trying to do--destroy the people of God. God's command, His counsel, for them is to S-T-O-P!!!!

The restlessness of man, his fruitless search after that which he does not attain, is one of his greatest enemies.

God commands him to stop. But not just to stop, but to begin to learn about God and to continue learning until that knowledge is complete--a goal which cannot be attained either in this life. BUT HE IS TELLING THEM TO STOP ONE THING WHICH THEY CANNOT DO AND START SOMETHING ELSE WHICH THEY CANNOT FINISH. The difference is that the one ends in eternal disaster; the other ends in the greatest possible glory.

We will come back to the lesson in just a moment.

II. THE PROMISE: "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

The Lord uses the same verb twice here. It means to be exalted as a King. And we are told who the subjects will be, and where the kingdom will be. The subjects will be "the heathen"--a common reference to the Gentile nations because of their hostility and barbarity against the people of God.

Cf. Rev. 11:15,

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

The promise is also given by the Apostle Paul in Phil. 2:9-11.

The repetition establishes it as a fact, and also lets us know that, in comparison with eternity, this will not be long in coming. Cf. Gen. 41:32.

What a day this will be! How wonderful it would be if our leaders today would only realize how things are going to end--under the sovereign rule of God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, as we see so often in the Word of God, it is the knowledge of the future that enables us to act as we should in the present.

But let us return to

III. THE LESSON: "Know that I am God." This obviously is the most important part of the verse because:

- 1) It will do no good to stop if we do not learn this, and
- 2) It will matter little what happens in the future if we do not learn this now!

Some people have never started to learn that there is a God, and that HE IS GOD! This means:

- 1) That He is absolutely sovereign over all men and nations of all generations.
- 2) That He is the only One Who holds that position. All other gods are not really gods at all--though they may be worshipped as such.

Cf. Isa. 43:10-12; 45:21, 22. This is a note which is very prominent in Isaiah's prophecy.

What do we need to know about God? Can this Psalm help us to learn some of the things which we need to know?

Yes, it can! Let me point out five specific things in the Psalm.

A. Who God is. In addition to the name, God, He is twice referred to in the Psalm as "the Lord of hosts . . . the God of Jacob" (vv. 7, 11).

He is the Lord of all created beings; He is the God of the nation Israel--the God of the Old Testament!

B. What God is: "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psa. 46:1).

He is not only invincible Himself, but He makes His people the same way.

There is no point in opposing the people of God because, if you do, you need to know that you are doomed to failure before you start.

C. Where God is.

When Rabshakeh came to defy Judah on behalf of the king of Assyria, do you remember that he said,
 "Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us"
 (Isa. 36:15a).

Man have often scorned this truth. The Russian spacemen said they did not see God in outer space! The fact is that they did not have to go out there to find Him. YOU WILL FIND GOD WHEREVER YOU FIND HIS PEOPLE. Cf. Psa. 46:1b, 5, 7, 11.

Cf. Heb. 13:5, 6, "Let your conversation be without . . ." Also see Matt. 28:18-20.

D. What God has done.

Basically the Psalm deals with one thing: GOD HAS PRESERVED HIS PEOPLE THROUGH ALL THAT THEY HAVE FACED--keeping them in peace (v. 2a), and giving them a song to sing (the Psalm).

Concl: Can you find anything that will compare with all of this?

One final word about the Psalm: Do you notice that you have the word, "Selah," three times? In vv. 3, 7, 11.

Spurgeon has some interesting comments about this word. He says that this is a word indicating a pause in the music (to allow the singers time for meditation and rest). But it is only a pause. It indicates that the music will resume again. This is the thought when the word comes at the end of the verse. Then he gives this little verse of six lines:

SELAH bids the music rest,
 Pause in silence soft and blest;
 SELAH bids uplift the strain,
 Harps and voices tune again;
 SELAH ends the vocal praise,
 Still your hearts to God upraise.

What does this mean? It means that Psa. 46 was never to be removed from the hymn book because the words of this Psalm will never need to be revised or replaced!