

CB - 8/21/66 am.
CBapt - Victoria 2/12/67 pm.

WHAT ABOUT MAN?

Psa. 103:15-18

Intro: Up to this point in the Psalm we might say that David is answering the question, WHAT ABOUT GOD? - especially in his relationship to men.

But nowhere in the Psalm has he raised the question, WHAT ABOUT MAN?, i.e., what about man by himself, apart from God? This he does in vv. 15, 16.

I. What about man By Himself (vv. 15, 16)?

This is basically where the world rejects the Bible - concerning what it teaches about man.

David had struggled with the problems in his own heart and life. He had come to know a great deal about God:

and he could not get over how good and merciful God had been to him - not dealing with him according to his sins, etc.

By why is all of this true?

When you look at man by himself what do you see?

David suggests ~~four~~ five things.

We do not need the Bible to see these things, but we may not see it unless the writers of Scripture take the time to point it out for us.

A. Depravity: "As for man."

Any Hebrew reading this Psalm in the original would know that David is using a special word for man here.

Though it appears frequently it is not the most common word.

It is a word from which Seth got the name of his son:
ENOS. Cf. Gen. 4:26.

Many grammarians say it is derived from the Hebrew verb (עָנָה) which means to be desperately diseased, to be incurably sick, to have a fatal illness.

This is what Seth called his son.

It is this same word which Jeremiah used when he said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

When God created Adam & Eve he called them both Adam because they were made from the earth, BUT SETH'S NAME FOR HIS SON INDICATES THAT SOMETHING DREADFUL HAD HAPPENED TO THE HUMAN FAMILY!

He was desperately wicked at heart with a moral disease which, humanly speaking, is

incurable.

Consequently, "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4:26).

Turn over to Gen. 6:5, and then to Gen 8:21.

Read again Paul's summary of OT teaching in Rom. 3:10-19, "as it is written, there is none righteous . . .

cf. Rom. 3:23; 6:23.

no wonder David said, "What is man (Enos) . . . or the son of man (Adam) . . ." (Psa. 8:4).

~~or Vitality~~
B. ~~TEMPERATURE~~ ^{or Glory}: "He flourisheth."

This means he glitters, he sparkles - like a flower he produces blooms.

Man is an amazing creature. We marvel at his achievements. His powers of endurance are nothing short of amazing.

Psa 8 again says,

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (vv. 5, 6).

"He flourisheth."

After all, was he not created in the image and likeness of God?

In the areas of science, physical culture, the arts (music, lit., etc.)

sports - what glories have
been heaped upon man
God has crowned him with
glory and honor.

But how does he flourish?
What does our simile liken
him to?

c. "As grass"

Oh!

What else does it say?

"For the wind passeth over it
and it is gone."

What is this?

MORTALITY. Duh!

David was probably quoting
from Moses in Psalm 90: 5, 6:

"Thou carriest them away as with a flood;
they are as a sleep: in the morning they are
like grass which groweth up. In the morning it
flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it
is cut down and withereth."

Note what David says about
evildoers in Psa. 37: 2,

"For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
and wither as the green herb."

James talks in the same
manner about the rich man -

"because as the flower of the grass he shall
pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen
with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass,
and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace
of the fashion of it perisheth: so also
shall the rich man fade in his ways" (1:10b,
11).

All the riches of the rich cannot
retain life, or return it.

Cf. Isa 40:6-8a

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth . . ."

Peter is referring to Isaiah's words when he writes:

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pet. 1:24).

It is not a very encouraging picture, is it?

Just as the hot east wind blasted the ears of corn in Pharaoh's dream, and almost killed Jonah at Nineveh - some where along the line the deadly winds hit every human being - and he is gone.

But to make the picture even more depressing, let us add the word

D. FINALITY: "and the place thereof shall know it no more."

When you look at man by himself you not only see death, but you have no hope. "The place thereof shall know it no more."

Death is final, terrible, dreadful.

This is all man without God.

The little bit of glory doesn't amount to much, does it? The sin and death with its awful finality cannot be compensated for by anything else.

But is there no hope?

Oh, thank God, there is!

Listen to this wonderful contrast.

Here we have

What about man and God?

II. ~~Man Under the Mercy of God~~
(vv. 17, 18). (Read them.)

David's account in this Psalm leaves no doubt but that SIN is man's greatest problem.

And there is not the slightest hint that all of his flourishing could in any way compensate for his sins.

He deserved judgment, and he knew it!

God would have been perfectly righteous ~~to~~ if he had left David to his fate.

David knew this too. But he could say, "He hath not dealt with us..."

What was his only hope?

MERCY, GRACE, LOVING KINDNESS.

Four times he uses the word "mercy" which we have here in

v. 17.

(1) v. 4 where it is trans. lovingkindness

(2) v. 8.

(3) v. 11.

Note how wonderful: The mercy of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting. This means:

- (1) It is without beginning.
- (2) " " " ending.
- (3) " " " limit.
- (4) " " " change.

These words are still just as true as they were when David wrote them.

But does it automatically come to all?

no.

It is "upon them" - as a protective covering - "that fear Him"

- that know Him

- that trust Him

- that worship Him

an expression which indicates genuine, personal relationships to God.

How is it manifested?

By a life of obedience to His Word.

Man became^a sinner when he violated the Word. He continues as a sinner by disregarding the Word.

mercy is cast upon me, judgment is for ever set aside when I come to Him - Then, His mercy is experienced day by day as I "remember His commandments to do them."

Concl: May I change the question from WHAT ABOUT MAN? to WHAT ABOUT YOU?

You may have good health, a good job, a wonderful family, a nice home, a savings account, two cars, a boat, all modern conveniences, but if that is all you have you don't have anything which can't be taken from you in a moment.

We may learn this again in the United States as we did in the 1930's + during World War II.

The only true security is that which we have in the Lord. He alone has atoned for sin. He alone has conquered death.

His mercy and grace are without limit. Why not come to Him and receive that wonderful salvation which cannot be purchased or earned because it is a gift!