

Praise and Fear the Lord

by Paris Reidhead

David's sermon emphasizes the importance of following God's way, fearing God, and true worship, which includes brokenness and heart-searching.

Duration: 32:54

Scripture: Exodus 19:21-22, 1 Chronicles 16:23-30, Psalm 51:10-12, Psalm 96:1-4, Psalm 96:9-10, Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Praise"

Description

In this sermon, David delivers a psalm to thank the Lord, emphasizing the importance of worshipping Him in the beauty of holiness. He encourages the people to declare God's glory among the nations and to fear Him above all other gods. David also emphasizes the need for a clean heart and a right spirit, constantly seeking God's presence and the joy of salvation. The sermon concludes with a call to worship God for His justice, righteousness, and unchanging word.

Transcript

Will you turn, please, to 1 Chronicles, chapter 16. 1 Chronicles, chapter 16. While you are turning, I'm going to begin reading a few verses.

Our text, or scripture, is found in verse 23 through verse 30. But that you might have something of the background of this portion, I will read these other verses. Verse 1, So they brought the ark of God and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for him.

And they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord. Verse 7, Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

Now verse 23, Sing unto the Lord all the earth, show forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen, his marvelous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.

He also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Glory and honor are in his presence.

Strengths and gladness are in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people. Give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord that glory do unto his name. Bring an offering and come before him. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Fear before him also all the earth. The world also shall be stable, and that it be not moved. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

You hold in your hand a book called Holy Bible that tells us about a holy God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit. And teaching us that we are to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

We are to follow peace with all men. And holiness without which no man shall see God. And we are instructed be ye holy, for I am holy.

What is holiness? What does it mean? Why did God inspire David to say worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness? What is holiness? Well, the best meaning of the word is this. Holiness is sacred observance of all duties toward God. Sacred observance of all duties toward God.

Now, this picture, what is it? They brought the Ark back to Jerusalem. But where had it been? What a pilgrimage of the Ark. You have to go clear back into Samuel, the fourth chapter.

And I'm not asking you to turn. But when Israel, under the captivity of the Philistines, sought to be delivered from the Philistines. And went out to do battle with them.

And were defeated. Then they said to Eli, we will take the Ark. And God had forbidden it to be taken.

But they took it. The two sons of Eli thought that they were competent to write again the word of God. So they took it.

And the Philistines heard the great shouting and praising and singing of the Israelites. Because the Ark was in front of them. But when they went to battle.

Whereas the Ark was there, the God of the Ark wasn't. And Israel was soundly defeated. And it said that some 30,000 of the Israelites were slain.

Great slaughter that day by the Philistines. And the Philistines took the Ark. They captured it.

Killed the two sons of Eli. And took it to Ashtun. And they didn't know what to do with it.

So they did the logical thing. They put it in the temple of Dagon. Only problem is that the next morning when they came into the temple.

Dagon had fallen on his face. So they erected their God, Dagon. Poor weak God who needed to be lifted up by the men that worshipped him.

And the following day when they came in. Dagon had fallen on his face. And his head had broken off.

And his hands had broken off at the wrist. And all he had was the stumps. And they said, what in the world are we going to do with the Ark? And they did the logical thing.

They sent it to Gath. And the people in Gath found out that as soon as the Ark came into their community. They were all stricken with hemorrhoids.

Now that's a nice Hebrew way of saying hemorrhoids. But it was uniform. Everyone.

And mice. And then they send it to Gazon. And they send it to Akron.

And everywhere the Ark went the Philistines died. Until finally the people of Akron said to the five princes of the five cities. What are we going to do with the Ark? So they called the priests.

And the priests said, well you've got to do. Make a test to see whether it's really the Ark that's causing the hemorrhoids. And causing the mice to come.

And just disturb your life. And take your lives. So this is what we recommend.

That you take a new cart that's never carried anything. Make it for the purpose. And then you take two milk cows.

That have never been broken to the yoke. And they have calves. And you put those two milk cows into the yoke.

And take the calves away. Put them back in little ways behind. Put the Ark on.

And if the milk cows start out on the low straight highway to Beth Shemesh. And they go neither to the right or to the left. And they do not hear the lowing of the calves.

And turn back. You're going to know that it was the God of the Ark that made the trouble. But don't send it back empty.

Make little gold figures. Five of them have hemorrhoids. And five mice.

And put them on as an offering to send back. And so that's the way the Philistines did it. A new Ark.

A new cart. An oxen that had never been broken to the yoke. And they, the cattle went straight.

Neither turning right or left. And the people in the fields that are harvesting their grains saw the Ark coming on the cart. And they saw the Philistines drop back.

And watched the cattle take it until they stood inside the land of Beth Shemesh. And then the men went from their fields. And they took the Ark.

They sacrificed the cattle. And they used the Ark for an offering. And put it on a large rock.

And they made an offering immediately to Jehovah, the God of the Ark. And they kept it there. Then they decided that it would stay right there.

And it did. For 20 years. Saul is now dead.

David is king. And the Ark is still down at Beth Shemesh. And David decides that he is going to go down and bring the Ark back to Jerusalem.

So what does he do? He does the logical thing. Oh, how often logic. The sensible logic becomes the guide.

Now, if the Philistines made a new cart, we make a new cart. And if the Philistines put cows that hadn't been trained to the yoke in, so will we. If it was good enough for the Philistines, good enough for us, said David.

And we discover something. They put the Ark on the new cart. They put the cattle in the yoke and fastened them to the cart.

And if you were to notice in 1 Samuel 7, verse 8, And David and all Israel worshipped with all their might. Here are the cattle and the Ark on the new cart. And there is David worshipping with all of his might.

With singing, with harps, with timbrels, with psalteries, with cymbals, and with trumpets. That was quite an outdoor scene, wouldn't you think? Here's the whole orchestra going, praising and worshipping God. And so there were a few alongside of it.

And one of the oxen stumbled. And when it stumbled, it jolted the Ark. And Uzzah, just one of the servants of the area, reached up and touched the Ark to steady it so it wouldn't fall off the cart and instantly died.

And the scripture says, David was wroth with the Lord. David was angry with God. And David said, how then will we ever get the Ark? So they took the Ark into the home of Obed-Edom and left it there.

And they covered it. Obed-Edom covered it. And God blessed Obed-Edom.

And David went back to lick his wounds and murmur against God. Because he was wroth with God. He was angry with God.

That God had not accepted his well-intentioned activity. Now, why was it that God would let the Philistines get away with it when he wouldn't let the Israelites? I'll tell you why. Because the Philistines were the world.

They stand for the world. They stand for the people of the God of this world. They worship Satan.

Dagon was another word for Satan. Now, those poor ignorant people didn't know what they were doing. They just did the best they can.

And God wanted to demonstrate that it was his power that forced, knocked Dagon over, so he let the cattle go. But who's David? David's a man of God. David's a man after God's own heart.

David is the one who later was to tell us that we were to take heed thereto according to the Word. We were meditating the law day and night. Why? Because Dagon's got some learning to do.

That is, you can't do things the way the world does it and still please God. Now, maybe some of the things that people of God do, the world does, but they don't do it the same way and they don't do it for the same purpose. You can't get your guidance from the world.

David, what happened? The priests came to David and they exposed David to something that he should have known, but he didn't. David learned that God's work must be done in God's way, to God's glory, if the people of God are going to be blessed. You see, in Numbers, the first chapter in the 50th verse, Moses

was instructed by God to appoint Levites over the tabernacle and over all things that belong to it, and they shall bear the tabernacle.

And these Levites who were to do this were to be from 25 years of age and upwards, and at the age of 50 they shall cease. And in Exodus, the 25th chapter, God told Moses, Thou shalt put rings by the side of the ark. The ark had four rings of gold, and Thou shalt put staves into the rings by the side of the ark.

And these staves shall stay in the ark. They should not be taken from it. Aaron shall come and his sons, and they shall take down the covering veil and cover the ark of testimony.

And after covering the ark, the sons of Kohath, not all the Levites, just the sons of Kohath, shall come to bear it. But they shall not touch any holy thing lest they die. And David had lost the word, the authority of the word, the teaching of the word.

And he was trying to do God's work in the way the Philistines did it, and God wouldn't allow it. And so Uzzah died. He died.

Because God had said, they shall not touch any holy thing lest they die. Now let's go back to what David is saying in the psalm and hear the words. Sing unto the Lord, all the earth, show forth from day to day his salvation.

Declare his glory among the heathen, his marvelous works among all the nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. He also is to be feared above all gods.

Oh, now a new element has entered into the worship of David. Before he had all the instruments, singing, harps, timbrels, psaltery, cymbals, trumpets. But now he has another element, fear.

Fear. Now, someone is going to say, but fear, of course, doesn't mean really being afraid. Oh, oh, fear means reverential trust, said Mr. Schofield in his notes.

I was driving some years ago now, over 55, not that I haven't driven over 55 for some years, but some years ago I was driving over 55 and that little surrey with the cherry on top came up next to me and that light shined in and that sound, which I thought was just the whistling of my tires on the highway, proved to be an encouragement from a man who said, pull over to the side of the road. And I pulled over to the side of the road. Now, when I did, I want you to know that what I felt was not reverential trust.

I was scared. Why? Because I broke the law. Do you understand? I, you mean reverence? Sure, I revered and said, state police, state of New York.

Yeah, that's pretty good. You better reverence the state of New York. About 12 million people do and they have reason for it.

Trust, sure, I trusted him to do his duty, but that didn't change what I felt. I felt fear. I was afraid.

Oh, I knew I hadn't robbed the bank. I knew I hadn't done lots of things, but I knew I had broken the law. And what David is saying here is, great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

He also is to be feared. Why? Because when he said it, he meant it. And he does what he said he would do.

Now, I know of another case when Ananias and Sapphira came into the presence of Peter and they lied to the Holy Ghost and they died. Do you think everybody that's lied to the Holy Ghost has died since Ananias and Sapphira? Oh, no. Does that mean God has changed his attitude? No.

And I know that there were some people in the day of Paul that ate unworthily at the Lord's table and they died. And does everyone eat unworthily? No, no. Does everyone who touches the holy thing die? No.

That doesn't mean God's attitude has changed. That doesn't mean that David on one occasion said, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. It didn't even have to get into the life.

He said, if I regard it in the heart, the Lord won't hear me. Now, David has learned about God. He's learned something.

He says, great glory and honor in his presence and strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto the Lord ye kindreds of the people. Give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory undue unto his name. Bring an offering and come before him. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Now, what's he saying? What is holiness? Sacred observance of all duties toward God. Do you remember the occasion when David was accosted by Nathan, the prophet? You recall when, well, let's go back. When Saul was told, what's this lowing I hear? When Samuel said, what is this lowing I hear? Well, I've saved the cattle of the Amalekites for an offering for the Lord.

And Samuel said that the Lord is great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord. Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of lamb. For rebellion is as witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

What did David learn in this experience of bringing up the ark? He learned that fear is a proper part of worship. Uzzah is dead and David saw it happen. When David, when Uzzah tried to do God's work the world's way, the writer of Proverbs said, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

You don't start to get smart until you fear God. That's the beginning of wisdom. For the fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

David discovered that true worship includes brokenness and heart-searching and confession. In the 51st Psalm, David, having been accosted by this prophet, says, Have mercy upon me, O God. How different.

Saul said, O Samuel, go tell the people, lest I lose face. David said, Thou art the man. And so what does David say? Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness, according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies.

Blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight, that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest.

Behold, Thou desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts shalt Thou make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

The sacrifices of God, said David, are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. O God, Thou wilt not despise. Where had David learned all of this? As far as we know, it was down near the house of Obed-Edom, when he was trying to serve God the world's way, and he saw Uzzah wither to the ground, dead, because he touched the ark.

And something happened in David. So when he stands before the people, he says, Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Part of our responsibility of worship is to open our hearts, to mirror the word on a daily basis, not to let anything stay overnight or from one day to the next.

Create in me a clean heart, renew a right spirit within me, cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation. Uphold me with Thy free spirit, is to be a constant attitude, not a rare event in the lives of God's children.

The Levites came every day to the labor to lean over it, that they might be clean through the word. So are we. And so as we come today to the close of this time of worship, including brokenness and contrition of heart, fearing of God, loving Him with all our hearts, but loving Him because He is just and righteous altogether, and His word endures from generation to generation and does not change.

His word is yea and amen. And years after He had said through Moses, they shall not touch any holy thing lest they die as a touch and as a die. His word did not change.

So let us, like David, who learned that they were to worship in the beauty of holiness, closed with a time of meditation, and then we're going to sing the two stanzas that we have here from two weeks ago. Search me, O God, and know my heart today. Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray.

See if there be in some wicked way in me. Cleanse me from every sin and set me free. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

And once you have, then do as was done by David, who could testify to the forgiving grace of God. Let the redeemed of the Lord say, so whom he hath redeemed are on the hands of the enemy. Shall we bow in prayer? And Pam, if you'll prepare to lead us after a moment of silence, we will sing from the heart.

Baba, you lead us in the singing. Search me, O God. You're going to have to open your eyes to see the words, unless you know them.

And then we'll have the benediction. But before we do, just this word of inquiry. If God shows you anything in your life with which you must deal, be wise.

Be wise. Follow David. Deal with it.

Judge it. Forsake it. Confess it.

Know the cleansing of the precious blood. God is dealing with you by dealing with that thing in your life. That thing, that event, that time, that point.

You see, the Holy Spirit never wants to depress us, only to cleanse us. The enemy says, you never do anything right. You always... The Holy Spirit says this, and he puts his finger at the point.

At the point. So if God is putting, pointing his finger of his love in your heart, be wise. Deal with it.

Judge it. Forsake it. Confess it.

Know the cleansing of the blood. That the joy of your salvation might be restored and flow fully. Let's just take a moment of disciplined silence as we listen to the Lord, as we thank him for the revelation he gives us in his word of himself.

You see, we have to worship him for his justice and his righteousness as much as for his love and his grace. All the attributes of God. We wouldn't have him any other than he is.

We wouldn't have him change. So let's open our hearts to him and not ask him to change to accommodate us. We'll wait before the Lord.

We thank thee for thy presence, Father, for the ministry of the Holy Spirit to our hearts. We hear again the word, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, observance of all sacred responsibility. And Father, we praise thee for thy grace.

We thank thee for thy work in our hearts and lives. And for each of us that find that thou art putting the finger of love at the point of our, our need. For this we thank thee.

Because faithful are the wounds of a friend, thy purpose is not to hurt us, but to heal us that thou mightest bless us. So as we sing, our Father, we do it from the heart as part of the prayer of our hearts in Jesus' name. Shall we sing? Search me, O God, and know my heart today.

Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray. See if there be make me pure within. Fill me with love where once I burned with shame.

Grant my desire to magnify thy name. Is that our desire? To magnify his name. Shall we stand and pray together our benediction as we have it in our bulletin.

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us. May your ways be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise you, O God, may all the peoples praise you.

Amen. Go in peace.

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