

Psalm 115 - Review

In chapter one-hundred-fifteen, part 1, we learned this is the *third* of the ‘Great Hallel’ Psalms (Psalms 113-118) and was one of the Psalms that were sung *after* the Passover. And that’s *why* the title/subject of it is “**Israel’s Deliverance from Egypt’s Idolatry**”, for this Psalm *does* teach us how the Lord (YHVH) delivers His children from idolatry. And that’s also why it began by pointing out how our Heavenly Father deserves glory, *not* us! And the Psalmist pointed out two (out of many) *reasons* that *all* glory should go to the Lord (YHVH), i.e. *because of* His mercy (kindness) and truth (faithfulness). And, as Jer 9:23-24 teaches us, while some trust in their own (carnal/worldly) wisdom, or their might (physical strength), or their riches (wealth), these are truly not good things to glory in *because* they are not faithful things to trust (or glory) in. For *only* trusting in our Heavenly Father is safe, because He *is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works* (Ps 145:17). And, as the Lord (YHVH) also said in Isa 55:8-9, His ‘ways’ and ‘thoughts’ are way higher above ours; so much so He likened it to the difference between heaven and the earth! Thus, only if we take God’s ‘thoughts’ and ‘ways’ into our own spirit (heart and mind) - through studying God’s Word and allowing the Holy Spirit to help us change our sinful ways, thoughts and desires - will we ever be pleasing to the Lord (YHVH). And make no mistake about it, it is the Lord (YHVH) who will be the judge of our soul and spirit (via Jesus Christ) at the ‘Great White Throne Judgement’ (Rev 20:10-15). So, the bottom line that: the only one we *really* should be concerned about pleasing (first and foremost) is our Heavenly Father. And, *if* we simply humble ourselves before Him, *earnestly* strive to obey Him (from the heart), and repent when we fall short (for we all do, Rom 3:24), then He really is *so very* merciful (kind) and faithful (to His Word) to us. Which again, is *why* He (alone) deserves our wholehearted praise, honor, love and obedience - *and* that’s also why we should *always* give **Him** the glory.

And then we also learned that only the heathen will ask ‘where’ our God (YHVH) is; and they do so because they are *carnally* minded (Rom 8:5-8). They don’t realize that even the creation itself teaches us that God truly exists (Ps 119:1-2, Rom 1:18-23). And that’s *why* they worship idols, which are images (physical *and* spiritual) made to worship false gods. Yet, we who do know that our Creator (the Supreme God) exists, know that He dwells in the ‘heavens’. Not only because He can fly in the sky (and outer space) in His magnificent flying vehicle, but also because the Word of God tells us He dwells in a ‘higher’ (spiritual/heavenly) dimension that we *cannot* see with our flesh eyes, as Scriptures such as 2 Kings 6:17 teaches us. And we also learned that, because our Heavenly Father is the Creator of all things, He does do *whatever* He pleases (desires, #2654). And Rev 4:11 tells us our Heavenly Father (the *true*, and *Supreme* God, who is *our Creator*) has created us *for His pleasure*! So, it is *not* His pleasure for His children to have to die (2 Pt 3:9), which is why He literally came to earth, as Jesus Christ. Not only to shed His blood to atone for our sins (Rom 5:11, etc.) but *also* to ensure His truth is shared with the world (John 18:37) - for truth is the *only* thing that can ‘save’ us, i.e. cause us to live *eternally* (John

6:63, 17:3,17, Heb 4:12, etc.). Therefore, those who are *carnally* minded (and reject the truth) will only worship things they can see.

In part 2 we learned of the *vanity* of idolatry. For those who don't believe in our Creator (i.e. that there is a *Supreme* God who we *cannot* see) only worship things they *can* see. And many times, they made (and still make) idols (out of various materials) to worship those their 'false gods' (Acts 7:43). Thus, the 'heathen' are very *carnally* minded (Rom 8:5-8) and cannot understand that *true* worship is done (to the *true* God) in our *spirit* and in *truth* (John 4:23-24). And that's why their worship is also *very* carnal (Rom 8:5-8). And the Psalmist also pointed out the (obvious) fact that physical 'idols' people make (and worship) are nothing but *inanimate* objects! They have no 'senses' (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) nor can they walk or even speak. So, they are not even *living* beings - but (quite literally) lifeless *nothings*, which is why praying to them is *totally* 'in vain' (worthless, i.e. pointless), for they *cannot* hear (nor help) you.

And we also learned that 'idols' are not *just* inanimate objects people make from *physical* things. They are (more often than not) 'images' that people make *within their own heart* (desires, emotions, intentions, motivations) *and mind* (thoughts). Therefore, people often make (fashion) 'idols' *within* their carnal mind (Rom 8:5-8) by entertaining evil/sinful *thoughts* and *desires* (i.e. that which is contrary to God's Word). That's why Paul summarizes idolatry *as covetousness* (Col 3:5). So, people make 'idols' in their heart (carnal mind) when they *lust after things*. Therefore, *anytime* we 'make' something (be it inanimate objects, people, sex, power, money, fantasies, daydreams, entertainment, etc.) *more* important to us, than pleasing our Heavenly Father, then *it becomes an idol to us*. Said another way, *if* we have our 'heart set' on *anything other* than our pleasing (serving) our Heavenly Father (first and foremost), *it becomes an idol to us*. Of course, this doesn't mean we can't love others (for we should, Lev 19:18, Mk 12:31) or enjoy the things God has given us (1 Tim 6:17). It simply means we *can't* allow the things of this world to be *more* important to us than pleasing (serving) our Heavenly Father (1 Pt 4:1-2).

And then we learned that, those who make idols are 'like unto them'; and that means, those who make idols (physically and/or spiritually) are just as *lifeless*, and *worthless*, '*nothings*' as the idols are! Therefore, idol worshippers are as *spiritually* dead as those vain idols they worship. Yet, the Psalmist also pointed out that, even *trusting* in an idol *someone else* made is *just as vain*. And that's why it's to our benefit to worship the one (and only) Living God (YHWH) - who is, not only self-existent *and* eternal - but is *also* the *only* one who can give us *eternal* life too! So, the Psalmist did a really good job at 'making his case' for *why* we shouldn't make, or trust in, idols *of any sort* – not physically *nor* spiritually, in our own heart and mind. For, of a truth, ***we become like what we worship.***

In part 3 we learned of the importance of *trusting in* the one (and only) Living God (YHWH) *instead of* vain idols who cannot hear, nor help us. And the Psalmist not only called all of Israel,

including the priesthood (house of Aaron), but also all people everywhere (regardless of race or status in life) to *trust in* the Lord (YHVH) - for He alone is the *only* one who can *truly* help, and protect us, *no matter what* comes up in life. And that's *why* it's so important to put on all of the Gospel (spiritual) armor our Heavenly Father gives us (Eph 6), especially the 'shield of faith' that protects us from all of the 'fiery darts of the wicked', which are *lies* which people *spiritually* 'throw' at us. And the Psalmist also stressed that the Lord (YHVH) doesn't forget those who do trust in (and fear, love and obey) Him, for He absolutely blesses those (no matter their race, or status in life) who do *trust in* (and fear, love *and obey*) Him, wholeheartedly. And the Psalmist even explained the Lord will bless us *more and more* as we *continue to* seek, hear, obey, fear and trust in (wholeheartedly) God (YHVH) Almighty! Therefore, it's also important for us to find, and use, our God given gifts. For (to reiterate) the Lord (YHVH) will indeed 'increase' (bless) us 'more and more', *so long as* we 'stick with it' and don't lose focus on our purpose in life, which is to *serve God* and not our '*self*' (1 Pt 4:1-2).

And then the Psalmist pointed out that the *reason* the Lord (YHVH) can promise to bless us is *because* He's our Creator. So, He can also *cause* us to be blessed (or cursed) by the earth we dwell in. Indeed, one of the best physical blessings is getting 'rain in due season' that nourishes the plants, grass and animals from which we need to sustain ourselves on. Yet, this blessing is also *spiritual* (such as with peace of mind), for the Word of God is the spiritual 'food' we need to sustain our spirit (John 6:63). And the Psalmist then pointed out that the 'dead' don't (and *cannot*) praise (celebrate, #1984) the Lord. And that's simply because their spirit has gone back to the heavenly/spiritual dimension and, therefore, their flesh is no longer alive (Exx 12:6-7, 2 Cor 5). So, when our spirit (and soul) departs our flesh body, that means – *in this fleshly dimension* – we can't praise our Heavenly Father anymore. And he pointed this out to stress the importance that, as long as we are still alive in these flesh bodies, we *should* praise (celebrate, #1984) and bless (with praise, love and obedience) the Lord (YHVH) for His salvation, i.e. delivering us from the vanity of worshiping idols - for that is one of the *best* blessings of all!

And then the Psalmist ended this lovely Psalm with the precious phrase '***Praise the LORD***', which (as we've learned in Ps 104, 105, 106, 111, 112, 113) means to praise (celebrate) Yah (a shortened version of Yehovah), which is the Hebrew word most Christians are actually familiar with, i.e. *Hallelujah*. And, by studying the various usages of this phrase (praise ye the Lord) we learned several things. From Psalms 104-106 we learned of three 'key' (critically important) elements *to Jesus Christ's return* (His Second Advent), which are *salvation, obeying God's Laws and the wicked being consumed*. And from studying Psalms 111-113 we learned three 'key' (critically important) elements *to praising* the Lord (YHVH), which is for His wonderful (and righteous) '*works*', '*ways*' and '*name*' (characteristics). So, the fact that this Psalm ends with the phrase 'Praise ye the Lord' (Hallelujah) *also* teaches us something, which is the *importance* of praising (celebrating) our Heavenly Father *for* His delivering us from 'vain idols', for that truly is *how* He 'saves' us! As Paul so well wrote, in Rom 6:23, *the wages of sin is death; but the gift*

*of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. And that's something we should *never* forget to thank, and celebrate (praise), our Heavenly Father (YHVH) for!*

*3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy **hath begotten us again unto a lively hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

*4 **To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away**, reserved in heaven for you,*

*5 Who are **kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation** ready to be revealed in the last time.*

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

*7 That **the trial of your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, **might be found unto praise and honour and glory** at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

*8 Whom having not seen, ye **love**; in whom, though now ye see him not, **yet believing**, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:*

*9 Receiving **the end of your faith**, even the salvation of your souls.*

1 Peter 1:3-9

Praise Ye the Lord! *Hallelujah!*

AMEN.