

Psalms Chapter 95 - Review

In part 1 we learned this 95th Psalm is part of the section (chapters 95-100) that is related to the ‘*Rest for the Earth Anticipated*’, and the subject/title of it is thus “*Worship in View of the Rest*”. And the ‘rest’ being spoken of here is *peace* for the earth, including the inhabitants (and nations) of the earth. And, true peace for the world cannot come without the return of the King of kings, who is Jesus Christ. But, internal peace (of mind and heart) also cannot come unless we *truly* worship our Heavenly Father, which comes only when we accept Jesus Christ (God in the flesh). Therefore, this Psalm addresses the worship of the Lord (Yehovah). And the Psalmist gave us several key clues as to just what that (true worship) involves, in the first couple of verses in this great chapter. For he first called us to come and sing unto the Lord (YHVH) and make a joyful noise (shout for joy) to Him (because He’s our Rock and our Savior). And then he called us to come before His presence with thanksgiving and psalms. So, remembering to praise, *and thank*, our Heavenly Father is a *vital part* of *truly* worshipping Him. But, as Ps 50 also pointed out, our Heavenly Father truly wants our *inward* worship. So, if we *only* sing and praise Him *outwardly* that’s really ‘missing the point’ of what *true* worship really is. And, as Jesus also explained, in John 4:23-24, *true* worship of God means putting *truth* in our spirit (heart and mind). That’s why *true* worship (on a daily basis) also involves studying God’s Word, absorbing it into our heart (desires, emotions, intentions and motivations) and mind (thought process) and then striving to actually *obey it from the heart*. And, when we do this *faithfully* each day, we truly cannot help but give Him praise and thanksgiving each day, if only in our heart and mind (i.e. praying to Him throughout the day).

In part 2 we learned of some examples that teach us how to truly worship our Heavenly Father, Yehovah (i.e. YHVH). For, the Psalmist declared that the Lord (YHVH) is a *great* God (the *Almighty* God who is *Omnipotent*) and that He *alone* is a great King *above all* ‘gods’ (rulers and judges). And the Psalmist then continued to praise the Lord (YHVH) by declaring how He *alone* created the earth and the sea (along with all things therein, of course). And, the fact that God (YHVH) created *all* things is *why* the earth (and all things therein) *belong to Him*. And this includes even us, for we too are His creation. So, no matter how high the mountains are, or how deep the valleys are, our God (the Almighty) has power (and control) over *all* the earth, no matter how ‘low’ or ‘high’ they are. And then we saw the Psalmist again call us to worship the Lord but by bowing down (kneeling) before the Lord (YHVH), who is our Maker (Creator of our body, soul and spirit). But again, we also learned that all outward forms of worship mean *nothing* to Him if they are *not* accompanied with our *sincere inward* worship (a point He made very clear back in Psalm 50). As He said through the prophets, what He really wants is our love (Deut 10:12-16; Mk 12:28-31; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8, etc). And God’s ‘love language’ is *obedience*! As Jesus said, IF we love Him we *will obey* Him (John 14:14, 23)! And further, we also learned that, today we don’t have to go to any temple (not even a Church) to worship our Heavenly Father. As Jesus said in John 4:23-24, those who want to *truly* worship the *true* God (YHVH) must do so ‘in

spirit and *in truth*'. That means not only having affections for Him, but also studying His Word to put truth (His Word, John 17:17) into your heart and mind. And further still, you truly don't have to always physically bow down to worship the Lord (YHVH) - although that's certainly ok to do at times. We can (and should) worship Him *wherever we are* in our own mind, so long as we are *sincere*. And truly, He especially enjoys this. So, we should remember to thank and praise Him (sincerely, Ps 95:1-2) when He helps us throughout the day, blesses us, comforts us, leads and guides us, and even when He chastises us - because He only does so for those who He loves (Heb 12).

In part 3 we saw the Psalmist use an analogy that is commonly used in the Bible, especially the Psalms: that of a shepherd leading his sheep. And the reason the Psalmist used this analogy is because he turned from speaking of the rest that is to be found in *true* worship, to *warning* how that spiritual rest *can be lost* through *unbelief*. Therefore, just as a shepherd leads, and protects, his sheep throughout the land to find good food to graze on, so too does our Heavenly Father. For Israel of old (those who came out of Egypt) this was quite literal; for He led them, physically, through the wilderness just as a shepherd does his sheep (Ex 13:21-22). So, the Psalmist drew on the analogy, of a shepherd leading His sheep, to point out how God will lead (and protect) us too, *wherever* we are (via the Holy Spirit given to us when we believe upon, and obey, Jesus Christ). However, that's *only if* we are willing to 'hear His voice' (His Word *and* Holy Spirit) and not harden our hearts to His 'voice', as Israel did when they were wandering in the wilderness.

In part 4 we learned of a *beautiful* truth this Psalm *reveals* about *true* worship: **not hardening your heart to the truth** (i.e. hearing and taking hold of the truth, so that you *obey* it) **is the essence of true worship!** Therefore, *true* worship is not merely about 'outward' worship, such as lifting your hands to God, kneeling to Him, singing to Him, praising Him or even going to Church... all those things are pleasing to Him *but not if* you are *rejecting* His Holy Spirit and His Word! Hardening our heart to the truth (God's Word and Will, i.e. His Holy Spirit also) is thus living for the 'lusts of men' instead of the 'will of God'. But softening (opening) our heart to *the truth* (God's Word and Holy Spirit, Deut 10:1; Jer 4:4) **is** living for God's Will, which is what brings peace, protection and blessings even while we're in a flesh body. But eventually, that's also what will bring us *eternal* life when we die, or when Jesus Christ returns (which ever happens first). And then we also learned of some historical examples of how the Israelites who came out of Egypt lost out on inheriting the Promise Land *because of their unbelief*, which caused them to continuously rebel against God (via chiding with Moses and Aaron). And, because they were such a good example of what we should *not be like*, Paul also quoted from this Psalm 95 (in Hebrews 3) when warning us against having a hardened heart, which will assuredly cause us to lose our inheritance of the *first* resurrection (*eternal* life) and ruling with Jesus Christ when He returns and ushers in the Millennium (Rev 20:4-6).

So, let's remember the great lessons from this beautiful Psalm 95, and Paul's lesson to the Hebrews (chapters 3-4). For, we will *never* find spiritual rest (peace of mind) **if** we *don't* study, *and obey*, the Word of God - nor will we obtain *eternal* life either. And, we certainly cannot *truly* worship the Lord (YHVH) our God **if** we harden our heart to His Word (Voice), which *is truth* (John 17:17). And while singing, praising and thanking God are *a part of* worshiping our Heavenly Father, the *essence* of true worship rests upon whether or not you *truly believe* (and thus sincerely strive to obey) our Heavenly Father (His Word), *instead of* hardening your heart to His 'Voice' (His Word and Holy Spirit) ...

6 Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Mic 6:6-8

*13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God, and keep his commandments:** for this is the whole duty of man.*

*14 For God **shall** bring every work into judgment, **with every secret thing**, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

Eccl 12:13-14

AMEN.