

THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD OUR GOD

Psalm 90

The Eternity of God, and Man's Frailty (Mortality)
A Prayer of Moses the man of God.

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

You turn man [headed] to destruction, and say, "Return, O children of men." For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night. You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which grows up: in the morning it flourishes and grows up; In the evening it is cut down and withers.

For we have been consumed by Your anger, and by Your wrath we are terrified. You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your countenance. For all our days have passed away in Your wrath; we finish our years like a sigh.

The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Return, O Lord! How long? And have compassion on Your servants. Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days! Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us, the years in which we have seen evil.

Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.

Moses wrote this psalm or song. It is said to speak of "man's mortality in immortal words"¹, as we are ultimately intended to be part of God's eternal kingdom. Moses speaks of man's mortality, not only in comparison to God's immortality, but in our relationship to God, as we get closer to God, we recognize and experience the sovereignty of God and the unmatched glory and beauty of God. We are not to be trying to get God onto our agenda or plans but it is up to us, by the leading and teaching of His Holy Spirit in His Word, to

1 Interpreter's Bible, Psalms Proverbs, pg. 487

get on His plan. He is leading us to know, trust, and love Him as He loves us, as we are His creation. He is wanting us to acknowledge Him as our God, our Lord, and our Savior, and our Heavenly Father and then what we begin to discover is the awesomeness and glory and the beauty of the Lord God Almighty. Moses is the only person known to have gotten close enough to God that his face glowed, to which the people made him wear a veil over his face. That is my goal, until my face glows from the glory of God, I'm not where I want to be. That is Biblical by the way. Jesus said that in the end, **"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Matthew 13:43)** My intention is not to bore people with doctrine, or dazzle anyone with fancy talk. God is teaching us, he's teaching me, and I am just passing it along, to be disciplined and to allow myself to be disciplined (discipline doesn't always mean punishment, by the way), so that I, so that we, can be all that God has purposed for us. The greatest blessing, our ultimate goal though, in that, is that we get to know God for who He is and to be WITH God, dwell with God, for all of eternity.

To reiterate what we have been learning or have been reminded of, in our study of some of the Psalms, we have recognized the importance for us to **know** God, and His ways; for OUR understanding and so that we may know our Creator. There is but one way and one way only that we can KNOW GOD and that is through the Word of God. The Word of God has a two-fold meaning for us. 1. The Word of God is the written Word that we have in our Bibles, the Holy Bible, that the Apostle Paul told his spiritual son Timothy, that **"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."** (2 Timothy 3:16-17) We don't have to read Plato and Socrates or learn the deep secrets to the mystery religions. The Word of God will make you **"complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."** That, by the way, is one of those 3:16s that I spoke of last week. It is an interesting study to look at the 3:16s in the New Testament. Not all of them are positive and uplifting but it is still worth noting, that it can be said, that if one follows the 3:16s in the New Testament you will be good. Chief among the 3:16s, it could be said, is **John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."** (John 3:16-17)

It is then in our understanding of God and His ways that we learn to love God as He has first loved us, just as the Apostle John stated, **"we love Him because He first loved us."** (1 John 4:19) There is where we have 2. the second meaning of our understanding of the **Word of God**. Christ Jesus IS the Word of God. The Apostle John starts off His gospel saying, **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with**

God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." (John 1:1-5) "[T]he Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:10-13) That right there is what Jesus told Nicodemus must take place in order to be saved and to become a child of God. One must be born-again, born of the Holy Spirit, also called the Spirit of Christ (the Word of God). We must believe on Christ and then receive Him. That, is the beginning our our new life IN CHRIST as a child of God, where you literally become a "new creation". "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17) That is when the Holy Spirit begins working in us. Without the Spirit of Christ working in us the written Word of God can just be a lot of fanciful tales and hard to understand sayings. As Jesus said, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13) Jesus prayed just before He was to be crucified on a cross, He prayed to His Heavenly Father, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." (John 17:17) I hope we all understand the necessity to be IN THE WORD, His written Word and then in fellowship with Him, and in having Him minister to us in His Word.

The Apostle Paul tells us, in 1 Corinthians 1:30, that it is in Christ that we will receive 4 necessary things from God by abiding in the Word. Wisdom from God, Righteousness of God, Sanctification in God, and Redemption through God-in Christ. The Apostle Paul gave a sober reminder to the church at Philippi saying, "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12-13) It must become us to know that in Christ alone, we are saved, sanctified, and set free from the sin in us, that brings forth a spiritual death. But the Word is Life! Quoting the Apostle Paul once again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10)

We can't save ourselves, we can only go to the One who can save us- Jesus! Once we believe on Jesus dying on the cross for our sins, and then raising from the grave on the third day, conquering death, so that we too can overcome death, as we believe on Christ and then receive Him, we then recognize, from the Word of God and in what the Holy Spirit is working in us, that God desires to work in us His perfection, for His good pleasure-to make us like our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. But wait there's more! He is wanting us to KNOW Him.

We have recognized then, from the Psalms, and in His Word elsewhere, that we are to get to know God, but to also learn to trust Him. A key element to our understanding in trusting God is to KNOW that all His ways and works are perfect. "As for God, **His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven;** He is a shield to all who trust in Him." (Psalm 18:30) Deuteronomy 32:4 says, "He is the Rock, **His work is perfect;** For all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." "His work is perfect"! As we are His workmanship we have to trust God that He will bring about His perfection in us, as "His work is perfect"! We are told to trust Him and obey Him, to walk in His workmanship. God's goal, so to speak, will be accomplished when "we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man [as the body of Christ], to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." He is presently perfecting us, together, to be one in Christ!

We are being taught by God, through His written Word, through the working of the Holy Spirit, to know God and His riches for us in Christ Jesus, to trust God, as all His ways and works are perfect, and then also to love God and obey Him. Jesus said the great commandment of God is to love Him with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind and then the second commandment is like it that we should love others as ourselves, ie-to do unto others as you would want them to do to you. (Mark 12:30-31) That is how God is leading us into the unity of faith in Christ Jesus, to know Him, trust Him, and to love Him and His people, His creation-which includes even our enemies. God will sort out who is whose in the end. Meanwhile we live by faith in Christ and in the fruit of the Spirit of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)

When Jesus said "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me", He wasn't saying that He just has the knowledge of the way, the words of truth, key to life-He said HE IS the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (John 14:6) It is also in our understanding, of who God is, that He is perfect in all of His ways, and then, that we are His creation, that we were created for His purpose. Colossians 1:16 tells us, "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and

invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him."

As we looked at **Psalm 84** last week of how we are being led by God to know Him, trust Him, and love Him, and that Christ is the Way, Truth, and Life, we are to be following Jesus to where He leads us. As Jesus said, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor." (**John 12:26**) **Psalm 84** speaks of being led through the valley of Baca (the valley of tears) as He is leading us to His Mishkan, His perfected temple to which God and Christ Jesus are the temple (**Revelation 21:22**) and we are the living stones of His temple (**1 Peter 2:5**) and Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone (**1 Peter 2:7**). We are being led to His temple where we will dwell in His Shekinah glory, the fullness of the glory of God. Shekinah means, by the way, "He causes to dwell". We are following Jesus from Baca, to Mishkan, to dwell in His Shekinah glory.

Psalm 90 starts by saying, "Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God." Christ is our dwelling place. It has always been meant to be that way and always will be. "You turn man [headed] to destruction, and say, "Return, O children of men." For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night. You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which grows up: In the morning it flourishes and grows up; in the evening it is cut down and withers." Our time on this earth is but for a fleeting moment. How precious and wonderful it is that we are living in His present time, being brought into the unity of the faith in Christ Jesus! We are though, not even guaranteed tomorrow. Today is our day of salvation! As the Israelites were told to cling to God for He is their life, we are likewise clinging to Jesus, for He is our life, right here, right now! What we've also seen throughout the Psalms is that we are to acknowledge that JESUS IS our Lord, our God, and our Savior. Jesus proclaimed, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." (**Matthew 24:35**) The Word will not pass away and neither will anything found IN the Word! I'm clinging to you Lord Jesus!

"Return, O Lord! How long? And have compassion on Your servants. Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days! Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us, the years in which we have seen evil." There are many times that it may seem as though God has left us. Many times we won't seem to be hearing from God. Consider that a time of testing if nothing else. Will we continue to seek God, to know Him, to trust God, and to love Him? God gives to each of us a measure of faith

(Romans 12:3), will we continue in that faith in our time of trial? We are told, "without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)

We are told by Jesus, in Revelation 22:12, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." There is no denying the Word that tells us that each of us will be rewarded for what we allowed Him to do through us. Yet, we are told in Hebrews 12:1-2 to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." To me, my looking unto Jesus as my Lord, God, and Savior, that He is the Way, Truth, and Life, that He is truly my all in all, the only reward I am looking for is in Him, in His temple (for He is the temple), and to behold the beauty of the Lord, in His temple. Sound familiar? King David said in Psalm 27, "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." (Psalm 27:4) David didn't speak of looking forward to his rewards and in how he was personally going to be rewarded according to his works. David just wanted to know God, to dwell with God, and behold His beauty. Just as God spoke to Abram, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." (Genesis 15:1) His exceedingly great reward was that Christ would come from his seed. Christ is then too, our exceedingly great reward!

Psalm 90 ends saying, "Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands." What that is saying is that they want more of God in their presence. When we are praying for salvations, deliverances, and healings for God's people, we are wanting God to be glorified, as He is glorified when we are bearing fruit, and that we may be blessed to be in the presence of our Lord, God, and Savior. We not looking for God to entertain us or to dazzle us with a display of power. You can watch a thunderstorm to experience that. As God works in us to love God and His people, to really love God and His people, we naturally want more of Him, for ourselves and for others! Let the beauty of the Lord be upon us!