



Psalms 98-100

Psalms 98-100
Tape #7198
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now to the ninety-seventh psalm. This psalm is known as a millennial psalm in that it anticipates what will take place when Jesus returns again to establish God's kingdom upon the earth.

THE LORD reigneth (97:1).

That's in anticipation of the reign of Jesus Christ over the earth. It's anticipatory of that day.

THE LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof (97:1).

The isles are always a reference to the Gentile nations. Now in the second psalm the psalm of the kingdom age the Lord said, "Ask of me and I will give to thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the outermost parts of the earth for thy possession". It speaks about Jesus reigning over the whole earth; "Let the earth rejoice; the multitude of the coast of the Gentiles be glad" (Psalm 97:1).

Clouds and darkness are round about him: (97:2).

In the prophecies concerning the coming of Jesus Christ there is a reference to the coming with clouds.

"I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, he came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him" (Daniel 7:13).

"BLOW ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is a nigh at hand: A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong;" (Joel 2:1-2).

Zephaniah, the great day of the Lord is near. It is near and it hastens greatly even the voice of the day of the Lord. The mighty man shall cry there bitterly. The day is the day of wrath, a day trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of thick darkness.

The darkness has to do with the first order of business when Jesus returns to the earth. The first order of business is the judgement of the nations. Matthew tells us "Then he will gather together the nations that he might judge them and he will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats". So a day of judgement, a day of darkness and a day of clouds.

righteousness and judgement are the habitation [foundation] of his throne (97:2).

As he establishes the kingdom it will be established in righteousness and in judgement. They are the foundation of the reign of Christ upon the earth. In the prophecy in Isaiah concerning the reign of Christ he said,

“For unto to us a child is born, unto us a son is given and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David to order it and to establish it in righteousness and in truth from henceforth, even forever.”

Righteousness and judgement are the foundations of his throne, of his reign.

A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth (97:3-5).

Moses was reminding the children of Israel when they were stood before the Lord at Mount Sinai and he said,

“Especially in that day that you stood before the Lord your God in Horeb when the Lord said to me, Gather me the people together and I will make them to hear my words that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth and that they may teach their children. You came near and stood under the mountain and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven with darkness, clouds and thick darkness.”

And so in second Samuel we read,

“There went up a smoke out of his nostrils and fire out of his mouth devoured, the coals were kindled by it. He made dark pavilions round about him, dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. The Lord thundered from heaven and the Most High uttered his voice and he sent out his arrows and scattered them; lightening discomfited them.”

These figures of speech used of the awesomeness of the presence of God; fire goes before him. Now when Jesus comes to establish his kingdom, of course that is again what this is all about, it burns up his enemies round about. According to the scriptures, our earth, our world, is on the verge of the greatest calamities that the world has ever experienced since the world existed.

The time that is known in the scriptures as the Great Tribulation, when the forces of the antichrist will be seeking to solidify their rule over the earth and they meet in the Valley of Hinnom with the forces of the north and the east, which of course would be a combination of Russia and China, meeting the nations of the west. This great battle, which is called the battle of Armageddon, this final battle or the final war, all of the military powers of the world pitted together, the bloodshed will be awesome to the horses bridle; an area of about fourteen hundred square miles. It will be awesome. But in the midst of that great conflict, the Lord is going to come and he is going to destroy the antichrist, this great leader of the earth, the man that has taken control; he's going to destroy him with the brightness of his coming.

A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the

presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory (97:3-6).

I was thinking there was the heavens declaring his righteousness in judgement, maybe we'll get that further down.

As he judges, of course that's the first order of business as we mentioned. As God is judging the earth because of...look around and you'll see why, the wickedness that is here the Bible tells us that in the midst of this judgement "there will be voices coming from under the altar saying, Holy and true are thy judgements O Lord". Righteous, declaring the fact that God is righteously judging the earth.

Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods (97:7).

So the psalmist calls upon even the false gods that men are worshipping to worship the true and living the God.

Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD. For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods. Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: (97:8-10).

In all of these psalms that we are dealing with here from ninety-five on to psalm one hundred, with the exclusion of psalm one hundred, there are mentions of the gods that people were worshipping. When a person says I am an atheist, what he is usually declaring is that he does not believe in the God that is revealed in the Bible. It does not mean that he doesn't worship a god.

In the days in which the Bible was written they named the various gods that they worshipped. Basically the gods that they worshipped were ideals or ambitions or desires that they had for themselves. There was the goddess of love, the goddess of fertility, there was the god of power, there was the god of war, and there was the god of pleasure and the god of education. When a person made any of these things the master passion of their lives they would say "Well I worship Molech or I worship Mammon or Zeus or Aphrodite" or any of the many, many gods that were worshiped in the ancient pagan world.

Today the pagan world around us still worships these same gods only they don't have names for them anymore. A person will just usually say "Well I'm into pleasure, or money or education" but the thing that you are into is in reality your god. It is that force or power that is controlling your life, it is that power to which you have bent your knee, and it has become the master passion of your life. Though you may not call it by the ancient names, it is still nonetheless a god that you worship and serve and everybody serves some God. Some people even worship themselves and today are their own god. They look in the mirror and just idolize their god.

Everybody has a god. None of us live in a vacuum. None of us live without some motivation or drive. You see, you would get out of bed in the morning if you didn't have something that was pushing you and motivating you. The sad thing is to look at what man will worship and how man will worship when he has rejected the truth. The Bible says "because they did not have the love of the truth in their heart God will give them over to a strong delusion that they will believe a lie rather than the truth". This is so true in the world in which we live today; strong delusions were people believe lies and would rather believe lies than the truth such as evolution. It's a big lie and yet because they did not want to retain the truth of God, God lets them believe the lie and let them become convinced of the lie. It's sad and tragic how brilliant minds can be so foolish.

As I look at the followers of Roshnish, as I see them swaying and chanting and going into their trances I just shake my head in disbelief. I think, "O those poor people." When I watch those young people who were worshipping Hare Krishna you see them with their shaved heads, finger symbols and white robes and my heart goes out to them. I think, "What foolishness man believes when he rejects the truth". So there is always that decision that must be made as to which god I will bow my knee, which god I will worship and serve.

Either the true and the living God or some false god that I have enthroned in my life and I am worshipping. As John Dillon wrote that song, "You've got to serve somebody" that's very true. That principle or whatever it is that you serve is in reality your God.

For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods (97:9).

Of course he is the creator.

Now the exhortation.

YE that love the LORD, hate evil: (97:10).

That's only natural. God is holy, God is pure, and if I am worshiping and serving the holy and the pure God the natural consequence will be my hatred of evil. It's not popular to hate evil today. The big cry from the world is to tolerate evil but God said we are to hate evil.

he preserveth the souls of his saints; (97:10).

O I love that. The Lord will keep us.

he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked (97:10).

I love that too.

Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness (97:11-12).

The exhortation for those who are to reign with him in his kingdom to hate evil know that Lord will preserve your soul, will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked and we'll live in perfect kingdom age with him "For light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright" (97:11).

"Rejoice in the LORD," (97:12) not always can we rejoice in circumstances but we can always rejoice in the Lord.

The ninety-eighth psalm begins, as does the ninety-fifth or ninety-sixth psalm.

O SING unto the LORD a new song; (98:1).

The new song that we are to sing unto the Lord is a song that rejoices in the marvelous things that God has done.

for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory (98:1).

In the days of the psalms singing was a very important part of their community life, the singing and the dancing. When their armies would come home from the battlefields, as they would approach the villages, the young ladies of the village would come out with their tambourines and they would begin to sing songs of victory and songs of praise to the triumphant armies. They would sing songs of praise to the heroes of battle. It was a great celebration, the singing of songs of victory as their armies had triumphed over the enemies.

The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen (98:2).

This psalm dwells with the kingdom age. In fact these next three psalms are all a part of the kingdom age psalm. So you've got to project yourself forward to when the Lord is now reigning upon the earth and the rejoicing and all with the Lord in his reign.

Notice we are to sing unto the Lord a new song not that God might respond to us but in our response to God and for what he has done. So many times we hear from the pulpit the idea that we are to initiate so that God might respond to us. We can initiate through prayer or we can initiate through praise and that as we praise or as we pray that God then might respond to us. In reality it is God who has initiated our salvation, it

is God who has initiated his goodness, his grace and his mercy towards us. The understanding of the goodness of God and the victories God prompts a response from us. The true order is God the initiator and man the responder. For years I was trying to get people to initiate so that God could respond and it just never worked. Recognize what God has done and respond to him.

He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God (98:3).

This is the reign of Christ now. He is reigning over the earth and Israel is the place of his throne at Mount Zion. He is ruling and reigning from Zion and all the ends of the earth come under the reign, under the authority of the Lord “they have seen the salvation of our God” (98:3).

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: (98:4).

The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof and they that dwell there in.

make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornets make a joyful noise before the LORD, the king (98:4-6).

The worship that David instituted in Israel must have been exciting. You’ve got to admit that we perhaps have become a little formal in our worship of God. These sounding of the trumpets, the playing of the harps, the sounding of the coronets and the people shouting for joy and these loud singing of the psalms. Thousands upon thousands of voices. It is estimated that at these feasts in Jerusalem upwards of two hundred thousand people had gathered singing these psalms and the playing of trumpets and coronets in worship to God. I would love to get just involved in one kind of a worship service like that where you worship with the trumpets and the whole thing. I’d love it.

Let the sea roar, (98:7).

Now he calls for nature to lift its voice.

and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: (98:7-8).

Isaiah fifty-five says, “Let the trees of the earth clap their hands”.

let the hills be joyful together Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness [until] shall he judge the world, and the people with equity (98:8-9).

I’ll get my day because this is the kingdom age. The rejoicing in the Lord because of his coming to judge the earth with righteousness and the people with equity.

THE LORD reigneth; (99:1).

Again, the kingdom age.

let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved (99:1).

The cherubims are an interesting creation of God. They are described for us in Ezekiel chapter one and in Ezekiel chapter ten. They are a created being of God in the angelic order. It would seem that they are one of the highest of the angelic orders of created beings. They are described having six wings; they are described in the movement and in the sound of their movement. John also describes them in the book of Revelation in chapter four. He describes the cherubim that are about the throne of God in heaven. He tells about how the cherubim “cease not day and night saying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty”. The “I am” in the Hebrew is the plural so they are cherub but they are more than one, which makes them the cherubim. Revelation speaks about four cherubim about the throne of God in heaven.

It would appear that at one time Satan was among this order of high angelic beings. For in describing him in Ezekiel twenty-eight he said, "You were the anointed cherub that ruled". So Satan was at one time one of these high ranking angels.

Here he speaks about the Lord dwelling between the cherubim. In the making of the tabernacle it was a model of heavenly things. The Lord said, "Make sure that you make it according to the specifications and plans" and in Hebrews it says, "This was all a model of the heavenly". So that in the making of the tabernacle, it was the model of heaven and in the holy of holies, that innermost part of the tabernacle, was that fifteen-foot cubical gold plated room. There was the place where the Shekinah of God dwelled, that is the glory of God dwelled there. The high priest would one-day year go in twice in the one day to this holy of holies, in the area where he would meet God and represent the people before God.

This holy of holies, as far as the furnishing, had in it this gold box that was called the Ark of the Covenant. The lid on the gold box was called the mercy seat and there were carved on it these cherubim's whose wingtips reached to the sides of the room. This being a model of the heavenly, it gives you an idea of the throne of God surrounded by the cherubim there in heaven.

So the Lord reigns and let the people tremble in opposition. Ninety-seven, let the people rejoice and yet the trembling because he reigns with the rod of iron and in righteous judgement.

The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people (99:2).

He is ruling from Mount Zion.

Let them praise thy great and terrible [awesome] name; for it is holy (99:3).

The Bible tells us the name of the true God. God is not his name; God is his title so to speak. It is a designation of who he is. His name is YAWEH or YEHOUAH, we are not certain of the pronunciation. In the Hebrew text all we have are the four consonants, YHVH thus they are unpronounceable without the vowels. We don't have any way of really knowing the true pronunciation. There are those who guess it to be YAWEH but others have suggested YAHOUAH. That is the name of God and the name means the becoming one. So that God becomes to you whatever your need might be. God wants to be everything to you, the all-sufficient one; all sufficient for any and all needs that might arise in your life.

So the name of God is used in a compound sense as Jehovah or YAWEH Shalom; the Lord is our peace. He becomes our peace, he becomes our healer, he becomes our righteousness and he becomes our banner.

The king's strength also loveth judgment; (99:4).

That is Christ the king who will be reigning, he loves judgement.

thou dost establish equity, thou executeth judgment and righteousness in Jacob (99:4).

We today see a breakdown of our social order and one of the reasons for the breakdown, among others, is in the judicial system. In many cases it has almost become a farce. We all of us are probably familiar by reading or hearing of this young little girl in Huntington Beach. She was twelve years old and drug out of home and forcibly raped. Fortunately they caught the man who did it. Unfortunately they had caught him earlier this year after he had raped a woman in Anaheim but the judge disallowed the evidence and was set free. That man should have been behind prison bars. It wasn't necessary for that little twelve-year-old girl to be so abused. Had true judgement been issued, if had there not been this technicality by which the judge had dismissed him, that little girl would be so much better off tonight rather than having now to work out this horrible trauma from her mind.

That's just one of many, many cases where judgement did not go forth because of some technicality. It is interesting that in an interview that I had with Charles Tex Watson he was telling me that he fully expected to be out of jail within ten years or so because at that time Rose Bird was sitting on the Supreme Court, another liberal, and they were very soft on criminals. He said, "Now it looks like I'll be here for the rest of

my life” he said “I really don’t have hope of being released anymore. The attitude of state parole board has changed dramatically in the last few years.” It had to because of situations and cases just like the one that we mentioned a moment ago.

But when the Lord reigns and when the Lord judges it will be equitable.

thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob. Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy (99:4-5).

Again, all of the exalting, worshiping and so forth is in response to what God is.

Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them (99:6).

Using these men as classic examples of men who prayed and called upon the Lord and a received a response.

He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them (99:7).

God kept his side of the bargain.

Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a god that forgavest them thou tookest vengeance of their inventions (99:8).

Many times God deals with us and yet there is always that forgiveness.

Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy (99:9).

Twice reminding us that God is holy and to worship him and to exalt him. It’s a repetition actually of verse five and verse nine.

Then in psalm one hundred, the last of this series of psalms.

MAKE a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing (100:1-2).

This is a psalm that just exhorts us to worship the Lord, to serve the Lord and to come before the Lord. Notice, “Make a joyful noise...serve the Lord with gladness” (100:1-2).

I’ve often said and do maintain that if you can’t serve the Lord with gladness you shouldn’t try to serve him at all. God does not like griping servants. God does not like griping givers. If you can’t give to the Lord with a hilarious heart then don’t give for the Lord loves a hilarious giver. If you can’t serve the Lord with gladness then don’t seek to serve the Lord at all. It’s a mockery to God for a person to complain about their service to God. If you can’t do it with gladness, don’t do it.

Know ye that the LORD he is God: [Jehovah or YAWEH] it is he that hath made us, (100:3).

We were created, not we ourselves, we did not evolve.

and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture (100:3).

What a glorious place, what a glorious position.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name (100:4).

One of the indictments that God makes against the world in Romans chapter one is “neither were they thankful”. When the Pilgrim Fathers first established the colonies in New England they went through a lot of

deprivations and hardships. Being people who were very devote, they took these hardships in stride as in receiving them from God but they called for many times of fasting and prayer. They were discouraged and there was even talk of them returning to England in spite of the slavery and the restrictions that were there.

They had assembled in a public meeting and again the leaders were advocating that they call for a day of fasting and prayer. One of the old puritans said, "I think that we have come to the place where we are so concerned in the burdens and in our problems and in our fasting and prayer that we've forgotten to recognize and be thankful to God for all that he has done. Our colonies are being strengthened, our streams are full of fish, our crops are getting bigger, the land is absolutely glorious and we are able to worship the Lord here as we desire to worship him without the dictates of the government." He said, "I think rather than a day of fasting and prayer we should call for a day of thanksgiving".

So the first Thanksgiving, the day that has been celebrated every year since, a day in which we stop to remember the goodness of God and the blessings of God. Yes we have hardships, yes we go through trials, yes it's not easy, it's a tough life and world but yet there is so much to be thankful for.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (100:4).

Why?

For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations (100:5).

Now if you think "I just would like to give thanks but I don't know of anything to give thanks for" just remember that the Lord is good, that's cause for thanksgiving. His mercy is everlasting, that's great cause for thanksgiving, and his truth endureth to all generations" (100:5).

Father, again we are so thankful for the exhortation of Thy word. Lord when we are prone to maybe get under the burden, become a little weary, as we look at the world we become discouraged and it seems so hopeless Lord we thank You that Your day is coming and that You shall reign where ere the sun doth her successive journeys run; that You will reign and rule in righteousness and in justice. Lord, in mercy, we thank You that Your mercy is everlasting, that You are so good to us and by Your mercy You have forgiven our sins.

Lord, may we be a thankful people. May we be a people who are always looking ahead with anticipation to the glorious day when our Lord shall come and our Lord shall reign and he shall judge the earth in righteousness and truth. Bless Lord, as we wait for that day, give us that strength that we might endure as good soldiers the testings and the hardships that the child of God is exposed to in this corrupt world. In Jesus name, Amen.

I pray that the Lord will just make this a very special week for you. That you will be more aware and more conscience of his presence than normal. That in many different ways God would just sort of reveal his love and you'll be aware that God is showing me his love; he loves me. Just that neat kind of warmth will fill your heart and the recognition that God is watching over you, he cares for you and he loves you. May the joy of the Lord be your portion and be your strength, in Jesus name.