

Make Ready Thine Arrows

Psalms 21:1 – 22:1

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~ We all know there are two sides to every story. And it is an axiom of truth that one cannot love righteousness without hating unrighteousness. The inherent problem with discerning who is teaching the Gospel properly, correctly and completely can be difficult; because there are two sides of the Character of God, and those paradoxical perspectives often appear contradictory, rendering discernment of God exclusively to those who have a blood-tipped ear. On the one hand, we have great joys and happiness in Christ Jesus; on the other hand, we have wrath and unspeakable judgment of a holy God. The question then becomes: how does this work out in our everyday real lives? That's the answer we are going to get in this report from our Spiritual Safari.

Our expedition through Psalms has labeled almost every Psalm thus far a Messianic Psalm, although they are not all Messianic Psalms according to theological standards. I teach the Bible differently than it would be presented to you in a seminary or traditional Bible college. Well, Psalm twenty-one I also label Messianic – although, technically, it is not, either. This is not quoted verbatim in the New Testament as referring to the Lord Jesus Christ; but there is absolutely no way we can examine this Psalm and not conclude that this refers to Him. At least, I cannot. Naturally, its literal interpretation encompasses David's life experience, set in David's day; and that's what makes it such a remarkable prophecy concerning Christ *in that day*.

It is factual that the nation Israel regards this Psalm as referring to Messiah — and handle it accordingly. For example, the Targum, which is the Chaldeans paraphrasing of the Old Testament, and the Talmud both, teach the “*king*” mentioned in this Psalm is the Messiah. The great Talmudic scholar Rabbi Solomon Izhaqi – also known as Rashi – was born in ten-forty Anno Dominique, and endorsed this interpretation completely. He suggested it be given with factual caveat that Christian's who make use of

this Psalm assert Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. Well, to me, that's a pretty good testimony that this Psalm speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This Psalm is also very important in another direction: it has been used by the liturgical churches that observe certain days such as "Ascension Day." This is the Psalm they generally pull out when commemorating that holiday, particularly. It is also used in connection with the Lord Jesus coming in glory, and being set at the right hand of God the Father as our Holy High Priest. Frankly, I am not sure why we fundamentalists haven't paid more attention to the *ascension* of Christ – but we don't. We observe Christmas, Easter, the Lord's Supper – and many observe the Day of Pentecost – but the ascension is almost entirely ignored; and I think that is a big mistake. Well, we're going to have an opportunity to observe the ascension in this report.

We see the Kingdom of Heaven in this Psalm — and we see judgment coming upon those who have rejected Christ. The inspired text labels this as a Psalm of David, but it also encompasses Christ's reign as King upon the earth *in that day*; and this Psalm was undoubtedly used in the temple worship service. A liberal scholar, Dr. Perroni, said, "... *each Jewish monarch was but a feeble type of Israel's true King; all the hopes and aspirations of pious hearts, however hopeful they may be for their then reigning monarch, whether David himself, or one of his descendants – still looked upon these to Him Who should be David's Lord as well as his sons.*" That's quite a testimony, too, if you ask me....

XXD ~ (To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David)

1 The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

3 For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

4 He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.

5 His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

6 For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

7 For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.

8 Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

12 Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.

~ Jesus said it was, *“for the joy set before Me”* that He endured the cross and despised the shame. After that, Christ ascended into Heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. Verse one undeniably speaks of the joy of the Lord in having wrought our salvation. He rejoices and glories in the strength and power that has been bestowed upon Him to save to the uttermost whosoever will come to Him; and of angels and principalities being made subject to Him.

Verse two is the answered prayers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The desires of His heart have been given to Him. Jesus made a priestly prayer, and He turned in His final report to the Father, in John chapter seventeen, saying, *“glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may glorify Thee.”* Jesus also prayed, *“Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory.”* That prayer is going to be answered someday as we will be with Jesus; all other requests have been completely answered as revealed in this Psalm. This is the prayer of the ascension. This is something we should all stop, look and listen to as we meditate and think for a few minutes on these things.

Jesus came to the earth to give His life a ransom for many. In His earthly ministry, we find Jesus pleading again and again in prayer; particularly in the Garden of Gethsemane. We will find in a future Psalm, specifically Psalm one hundred two verses twenty-three and twenty-four, that the Father weakened His strength in the way of the earth, and shortened His days. Jesus pleaded not to be taken away in the midst of His prime days. Jesus asked for life, friends. However, Jesus died at age thirty three – in the very prime of life.

Hebrews 5:7 *Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared ~*

It may seem as if Jesus was not heard considering He was ultimately crucified. However, Jesus was heard in that He was raised from the dead! This is so important to understand that I do not feel I am capable of making it real to you, friends. Christ now lives forevermore in His glorified body and is at the right hand of the Father this moment. If Jesus hasn't returned by the time you get around to reading this report, you'll know exactly where He is. His glory is great in our salvation; and that is why we worship and glorify Him.

Further, Jesus knows His enemies; you may be sure. Many people say they love Jesus, but they don't know Him. We can't love Christ if we don't know Him – because that would be impossible; but one can sure hate Him while

thinking they love Him. Maybe you profess unbelief in hell; well, you will believe in hell one day soon, you can just write that down. The Bible very clearly teaches hell, my friends. When you say you do not believe in hell, you are in disagreement with the Word of God. You cannot love God and disagree with the Bible.

I know hell isn't a pleasant subject. We rarely, if ever, hear sermons on hell. I don't think I have ever even heard my pastor even say the word hell! Well, God doesn't take any delight in the lost man; judgment is the Lord's *strange work* – His wonderful work that brings Him joy is salvation – but God does both, my beloved – make no mistake about that. God wants to save you, but if you won't have salvation – or if you won't accept it His way – then there is nothing but judgment ahead for you.

Verse nine makes it unmistakably clear there is a hell. Fire is fire and judgment is judgment. Destroying fruit from amongst the earth can only have one spiritual meaning, friends – let's keep this real. His enemies conspired against Him when He was down here, and He yielded to them. In Revelation chapter twelve, the dragon wanted to devour the man-child. Well, the dragon is Satan; the child is Christ, and the woman is Israel. If Jesus had remained down here in the weakness of humanity, He would have been destroyed by the devil. That's all going to change when He returns and establishes His Kingdom here on earth. The man-child was called up to rule all nations with a rod of iron.

2 Thessalonians 1: 6 *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day ~*

I love this Psalm, personally; yes, many of you can thank God I am not God — because we would do things a whole lot differently — you may be

absolutely sure. We have now seen the cross and the suffering of the cross in this Psalm. We have seen the joy that resulted because Christ can now save us; and His prayers have been answered! Now, the King is in Heaven and crowned with glory and honor on behalf of His people. Many think of the Lord Jesus as a man acquainted with sorrows and grief; and the pictures I see of Jesus are always brutal, bloody, and show one unhappy, solemn, and serious looking person. I don't like those pictures — not at all; in fact, I don't like ANY pictures of Jesus — because that isn't what He looked like. How do I know? Just write this down: I know.

Either way, Jesus isn't going back to the cross — that's all done with — He is in Heaven, and His heart is filled with unspeakable joy. God wants to communicate that joy to you and to me today. I wish I could paint a glimpse of Him for you with words, but I feel that I have utterly failed you readers. What is your relationship to Christ today? If He is not your Savior, then what is He? Do you really trust and obey the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ today? Or is that all just so much lip service? Does your salvation really mean anything to you? Examine yourself, friends....

XXDD ~ (To the chief Musician upon Aijeletth Shahar, A Psalm of David)

1 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

~ So, our Spiritual Safari will end this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God with an introduction to the greatest Psalm, by far, that we have in the Bible. This Psalm is, actually, holy ground. It is the Psalm of the cross. In Psalm one, we saw a portrait of Christ; and closely examined His Character, His life, and His practices. In this Psalm, we have the passion of Christ in depth. This is an x-ray of the cross that penetrates His mind during His crucifixion! We'll see the passionate anguish He suffered as His soul was laid bare. In the Gospels, we examined the historical record of His death, burial and resurrection — and the events that surrounded the crucifixion. However, His secret thoughts upon the cross are contained in Psalm twenty-two.

The things that went on in His heart, soul and mind, as He suffered on the cross, will be discovered by reading this Psalm. We won't be standing at the foot of the cross looking up and listening to Him speak the things He said, though; no, my friends, this is different. In this Psalm, we'll be nailed to the cross with Him – *IN* Him. We were there on the cross when it happened; and as He was made sin for us. And Jesus did that so we might be made the righteousness of God.

1 Peter 2: 23 *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls ~*

Now, I see a whole bunch of people in religious circles who think His stripes healed us of some physical disease. Then, they die, and we don't hear them say that again. I understand God will heal each of us of all diseases and sicknesses – but He isn't going to heal us of the one that kills us. Further, God heals unsaved men all day long. So, we can know very definitely we're not talking about physical healing. No, we're talking about being *HEALED FROM SIN*; and until our sins are healed, my friends, not only will we not be healed physically – but we're already dead. Turn that over in your mind a few times and see what you come up with.

When the faith-healer fails to heal, they blame the subject for not having enough faith. That's the meanest thing anyone can say to another person. That's why I *HATE* the so-called "*faith healers*" – and because God hates them, too. How do I know God hates them? – Because God hates *EVERYONE* that usurps His glory and authority. God doesn't need us to help Him heal people; and He doesn't need us to work through, either. God has been healing people for a long, long time without you, and He will heal people *LONG* after you are dead and buried. Paul had a thorn in the flesh – but he never healed himself – and Paul had the gift of healing. Paul didn't heal Timothy, either; Paul told Timothy to take a little wine as medicine for Timothy's stomach illnesses. Telling God who He must heal is blasphemy. These are more things we need to completely think-through.

Christ was humiliated for our *S-I-N-S*, friends – nothing else. This Psalm opens with a desperate cry of One Who was forsaken of God. The Lord Jesus certainly *WAS* forsaken of God on the cross, my friends. I have read many commentaries that say Jesus was *NOT* forsaken on the cross; and that type of drivel is only ever uttered in an attempt to disprove the Bible in their own nefariously subtle way.

Satan never comes right out directly and says the Bible is an outright lie; he only says it didn't happen quite the way God says it happened. Satan is very subtle, and the devil is very smart. Instead of saying, *"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"* - the most disreputable manuscript says, *"My God, My God, for this was I kept."* That's the devil speaking heresy, my friends. The Word of God says Christ was forsaken on the cross as He bore our sins in His body on the tree. We have to conclude with the awful cry of the Lord in a dark hour abandoned by God. In our next report, we're going to see exactly *why* this happened ~

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