

Rhema Christian Center Triumphant Bible Study
Tuesday 11/14/23 & Wednesday 11/15/23
Presenter- Willie Bryant

^{NKJV} ***Psalms 115:1-18*** 2: The Futility of Idols and the Trustworthiness of God

Psalms 115 is a “continuation of Hallel Psalms 113-118”. Hallel is part of Hallelujah, which means “praise the Lord.”

This group of psalms “were used in OT times as part of the Jewish religious festivals and in homes everywhere.”

The author and date written are unknown:

Scholars believe Psalms 115 was most likely written in response to the unbelievers who marked Israel during and after the Babylonian Captivity. The foundation of the Hebrew nation was her relationship with the Lord. After years of Israel’s ongoing idolatry and rebellion, God disciplined the nation by allowing her to be overtaken by the Babylonians.

The grievous sins of God’s people had disgraced them. Their transgressions had brought dishonor in the name of the Lord, prompting some unbelieving nations to scoff at the God of Israel.

When the remnant returned to build Jerusalem, the enemies’ scoffing continued, but “God’s people pressed on inspired by the opposition.

By God’s grace, they eventually finished the temple and celebrated to dedicate it to the Lord (*Ezra 6:16 NLT*)

This Psalms could be summarized as:

- **Honor the Lord, because in contrast to the idols, He is alone is God vs. 1-8**
- **Trust the Lord, because He will help you vs. 9-11**
- **Praise the Lord, because He is worthy vs. 12-18**

^{NKJV} ***Psalms 115***

- 1) **“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, But to Your name give glory, Because of Your mercy, Because of Your truth.**

The remnant of believers who returned to Jerusalem did not take credit for their accomplishments.

They celebrated what God had done for them.

They directed all honor to the Lord's great name because:

- He had delivered them from captivity and brought them back to Jerusalem,
- He had strengthened them for the challenging task of rebuilding the city, their society, and the Temple where He (God) had manifested His presence, and because of His mercy (love) for his chosen nation, NEVER FAILED.

They celebrated God's truth, faithfulness, trustworthiness, and His dependability as their source of victor.

NOTE: we should never take credit for our accomplishments. It is God who gives abilities and opportunities, wisdom and strength. We need to acknowledge that everything we are and everything we possess is possible only because of God's love and faithfulness.

James 1:17 (GW) says, "Every good present and every perfect gift comes from above, from the Father who made the sun, moon, and stars. The Father doesn't change like the shifting shadows produced by the sun and the moon.

Verses 2-8 Honor the Lord because, in contrast to idols, He alone is God.

- 2) Why should the Gentiles say, "So where is their God?"**
- 3) But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.**
- 4) Their idols are silver and gold, The work of men's hands.**
- 5) They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see;**
- 6) They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell;**
- 7) They have hands, but they do not handle them; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat.**
- 8) Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.**

When Israel was overthrown by Babylonians, the idolatrous nation (the heathen) marked their faith in the Lord. They taunted them, disrespected, ridiculed, and

laughed at them... asking where is their God? what is God doing to show he is really alive?

This question gave the Jews and (gives us) the opportunity to contrast the false gods of their neighbors to the **true and living God of Israel**.

^{AMPC} **John 4:24** says, “God is a Spirit (a spiritual Being), and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (reality).”

“**Our God** is in heaven. He does whatever He pleases”. The lord does not sit where people place Him; He abides wherever He chooses. He does not go blindly or helplessly wherever men carry Him. He goes where He wills and does what He determines. He is in heaven, where He rules sovereignly over all creation.

^{NKJV} “**Psalms 106:36** says, “They served their idols, which became a snare to them.”

We become like the God we worship. As we worship the true and living God, He transforms our ears to hear His truth. He gives us eyes to see his word and, His world and the path He wants us to walk. Our” spiritual senses” develop, and we become more mature in Jesus Christ. (*Hebrew 5:10-14*)

But those who worship false gods lose the use of their spiritual senses and become blind to the light and deaf to God’s voice. (Warren **Wiersby**)

Dead idols lack the attributes of the living God; they cannot do good or evil.

- **An idol** is a god that people make. They are mere creations of human imagination, helpless and useless.
- An idol is anything more important to you than God,
- Idolatry takes many forms- it’s worshipping anything but the God of the Bible.
- We commit idolatry when we allow anything other than God to capture our hearts and control our behavior.
- It can be anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you only what God can provide.

- The danger of idols is that they can enslave you, put you to shame, and end up making you into their image, helpless and useless.

NLT Deuteronomy 5:6-9 says **“I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. “You must not have any other god but me. “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind, or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me.**

Consider this: let’s consistently fortify our hearts with truth and love from the word of God and surrender completely to God’s will and purpose for our lives.

Remember, Fortified = strong and secure. That's why God told Jeremiah, “Today I have made you strong like a fortified city that cannot be captured” (*Jeremiah 1:18*). He's saying the same thing to us today.

If you are in Christ, “you are I AM fortified: protected & strengthened inside and out. You are capable. You are strong. You are valuable.”

Verses 9-11 speak to three different groups of people; it calls upon everyone (including us) ALL to trust in the Lord., not worthless idols. Trust the Lord because He will help you.

- 9) Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield.**
- 10) House of Aaron, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield.**
- 11) You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield**

In response to the superiority of God over worthless and powerless idols, the psalmist urges “Israel,” the “house of Aaron” (the priests), and “ye that fear the LORD” to trust the God who is their “help” and “shield.”

This exhortation to the Nation of Israel is to Trust (batch) the Lord to depend completely on Him and have utmost confidence in Him.

His shield is something that stops an enemy from hurting you and helps to support and strengthen those who trust in and cleave to him. He is our shield against the storm.

In the house of Aaron, the spiritual leaders - the Priests ought to trust the Lord and set a good example of faith to the people. Matthew Henry's commentary noted, "This may refer to *Exodus 32:1-6* where Aaron failed to trust God and build the people a golden calf to worship and lead them."

In verse 11, the ones who fear the Lord "is speaking to the Proselyte ("the Gentiles who converted to Judaism."

Smith Bible Dictionary says a proselyte is a stranger, a newcomer – the name Jews give to foreigners who adopted the Jewish religion.

Vs. 11b Fearing the Lord means "to give the God reverence, undivided attention."

- Fearing the Lord will give you wisdom *Psalm 111:10 NLT*
- Fearing the Lord will keep you from sin *Exodus 20;20 NKJV*
- Fearing the Lord will motivate you to Evangelism *2 Corinthians 5:11NLT*
- All kinds of goodwill flow into the life of the person who fears the Lord.

AMPC Psalm 86;11 says, "Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may walk and live in Your truth; direct and unite my heart [solely, reverently] to fear and honor Your name.

12) The Lord has been mindful of us; He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron.

Mindful to us ...The psalmist encourages them to look back and remember all the good things God had done for them. Remember God's faithfulness and power when their ancestors were in bondage to Egypt.

God had brought them out of slavery in Egypt and crossed the Red Sea into the promised land. God will help them and bless them again, both small and great. And be their shield.

13) He will bless those who fear the Lord, Both small and great.

14) May the Lord give you increase more and more, You and your children

The word “bless” now means to do good things to.” In Bible times; it meant” have many children”!

The psalmist pronounced God’s blessing on each family of Israel would increase (yasaph) with children and grandchildren.

The multiplication was crucial for them to become a strong nation because “less than 50,000 Jews had returned from Babylon.

15) May you be blessed by the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

16) The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s; But the earth He has given to the children of men.

^{NKJV} **Jeremiah 27:5** says, “**I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power,** and by My outstretched arm, have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me.”.

In God’s good grace, committed to humanity as stewards or managers the responsibility to oversee the earth, therefore we are to be faithful steward of the earth.

^{NLT} **1 Corinthians 4:2** “Now, a person who is put in charge as a manager must be faithful.”

Verses 17-18 challenge everyone to praise the Lord

17) The dead do not praise the Lord, Nor any who go down into silence.

18) But we will bless the Lord From this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord!”

When we die, our voices are silenced in the grave, and we can no longer praise the Lord on earth. So, while we are living, we are to bless the Lord on this earth while we have the opportunity to praise the Lord in all seasons, situations, and circumstances; we should declare His goodness and faithfulness.

^{NKJV} **Hebrews 13:15** says “**Therefore, by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.**”

Sources used:

NKJV

The Hebrew Greek Key Study Bible

NKJV Cultural Background Study Bible

Logos Bible Study

Warren Wiersbe Commentary –Be Worthful Psalms 115