

The Beastly Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 49

Stuart W. Bryan

I. Jesus in the Psalms (cf. Lk 24:44; Eph 5:19; Col 3:16)

Psalms 1 & 2 introduce the entire Psalter. They remind us that all the psalms celebrate God's gracious revelation of Himself in His _____ (Psalm 1) and in His _____ (Psalm 2). When we sing the psalms, therefore, we speak to one another the word of Christ. Paul exhorts us, "*Let the word of Christ [Christ's own word] dwell in you richly, speaking to one another in psalms...*" (Col 3:16). When we sing the Psalms to one another, we hear Christ Himself speaking.

II. The Beastly Man

A. *The Summons*: Listen to My Wisdom! (1-4)

The Messiah summons all nations and peoples, whether noble or commoner, whether rich or poor, to listen to His voice. Why? For He imparts *wisdom* and *understanding* to those who listen to Him.

B. *The Lesson*: The Righteous Need Not Fear Beastly Men (5-15 cf. Gen 3:15; Ps 16:9-10)

The Messiah reminds himself and us that even in *days of _____*, days when wicked men have gained the ascendancy and are using their wealth and power to persecute and abuse God's people, there is no cause to fear (5). The power and might of the wicked, their honor and pomp, is only momentary (6-9). Though worldly men may delude themselves and ignore their impending death, nevertheless, they do not remain (10-12). While the wicked and their posterity may have power for now, those who love and fear the Lord will have the victory (13-15). Not even the grave can thwart God's promises to those who trust Him (Ps 16:9-10).

C. *The Exhortation*: Do Not Fear Beastly Men (16-20)

Notice, therefore, that the Messiah then drives the lesson home by exhorting us not to fear. The glory of the wicked is temporary; the righteous shall shine like the sun. So what should we think of a man who has earthly glory and fails to acknowledge that that glory has been given to him by God? The psalmist tells us in his conclusion, "*A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the _____ that perish.*"

III. Application

A. God and Mammon (Ps 62:8-12; Pr 11:28; Mt 6:24)

Martin Luther summarizes Psalm 49: “*This is a Psalm that instructs us unto faith, and teaches us to trust in God against that great god of this world, who is called _____*” (Plumer, 539). Jesus says:

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Mt 6:24).

We must be careful to make God’s priorities our priorities. As we do so, we will learn that there are many matters more important than money. Psalm 62:8-11 exhorts us:

8 Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. 9 Surely men of low degree are a vapor, Men of high degree are a lie; If they are weighed on the scales, They are altogether lighter than vapor. 10 Do not trust in oppression, Nor vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, Do not set your heart on them. 11 God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God.

B. The Folly of Big Barns (Lk 12:13-21; 1 Tim 6:17-19)

Jesus’ parable of the fool, the beastly man, who built bigger barns warns us of the danger of putting our trust in riches rather than in the Lord (cf. 49:6):

16 ... “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.’” 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ 21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” (Lk 12:16-21)

While wealth itself is a _____ from God, to trust in one’s wealth is to be a fool. Paul writes to Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-19):

17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

C. Wheat and Tares (Mt 13:24-30, 36-43)

Finally, our text reminds us not to fear when wicked and beastly men come to power. The tonic of the Scriptures is _____. There are other notes – anxiety, depression, pain, loss – but, again and again, they return to _____.

IV. Conclusion