



Sermon Notes from 29 December

Fresh Year, Fresh Worship (*Psalms 18*)

by Pastor Johanan Justin

David sang a Psalm (Ps. 18) when he came to the end of a season in his life. It is not merely the events of the year that define it but the presence of the worthy, eternal and unchanging God which does. His presence makes all the difference to our year.

5 truths about God for a year of fresh worship

1) The Lord is Strong in Defense (vv1-6)

v1 – David looks back on his life not just with gratitude towards God, but with love as well. Despite facing death, utter helplessness and dark depths (vv4-5), David abounds in love for God. It was in the dark times that David discovered God as his strong defender (vv2-3). We are to give thanks *in* all circumstances and not *for* all circumstances (1 Thess. 5:18a). As David did (v1), give thanks because God is our strength in the midst of evil! See God as the Strong Defender and find fresh love.

2) The Lord is Fearsome in Intervention (vv7-19)

v7 – As God sees David suffering, He is angry, and the whole world feels it. God intervenes fearsomely for David's sake. David saw God's deliverance with his spirit, not with his eyes. God is a jealous God; a consuming fire (Deut. 4:24, Heb. 12:29). No one can look at Him and live (Ex. 33:20). Anyone that comes before God falls to the ground as though dead (Rev 1:17a). God is a holy God, and fearsomely so! See God as the Holy One who personally intervenes in our lives and find fresh fear.

3) The Lord is Just in His Dealings (vv20-27)

v20 – The righteous who fear God have nothing to fear from Him. It is the wicked who do not fear God who have everything to fear from Him. God is just, and in His justice, we reap what we sow (vv25-26, Matt. 7:1-2, 6:15).

We are to live a life in submission and obedience to God (v23a), humbly acknowledging that only God can make our way blameless (v32). See God as the Just One who deals righteously with us and find fresh obedience.

4) The Lord is Victorious in Offense (vv28-42)

God is not just our shield and defender, but also a mighty Warrior who wins the victory. He wins the victory not only for us, but through us. Our enemies are spiritual in nature: our sinful flesh, the temptations of the world, the scheming devil (Eph. 6:12). We are to respond with the warrior-language of Psalm 18 (vv29-42). To be saved is to be victorious! God, through Christ in us, will emerge victorious. We fight because we have a victorious God. See God as the Victorious One who makes victors out of us and find fresh faith.

5) The Lord is Steadfast to His Anointed (vv43-50)

Psalm 18 is a royal Psalm, only fit for a king (vv43-50). It goes beyond any earthly king; it applies only to King Jesus. He is the Anointed One. In every year, the main focus is Jesus. The very top priority of God is for Jesus to tear a hole in the skies and to come down to wage war against all wickedness (v47a, Rev 19:11-16). See God as steadfast to His Anointed One and get fresh endurance.

Before the hole in the sky comes, we must see the gap between God and man. God throughout history has sought to close it for our sake (2 Pet. 3:9-10a). Yet in our disobedience, we tore it wider. God sent Jesus, who took the separation between God and man upon Himself in death. He became the way to God the Father. The veil has been torn (Matt. 27:51a)! Draw near to see God as the worthy, eternal and unchanging God!