

PSALM 50: The Lord Who Judges All Things

A psalm of Asaph.

- ¹ *The Mighty One, God, the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to where it sets.*
- ² *From Zion, perfect in beauty,
God shines forth.*
- ³ *Our God comes
and will not be silent;
a fire devours before him,
and around him a tempest rages.*
- ⁴ *He summons the heavens above,
and the earth, that he may judge his people:*
- ⁵ *“Gather to me this consecrated people,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.”*
- ⁶ *And the heavens proclaim his righteousness,
for he is a God of justice.*
- ⁷ *“Listen, my people, and I will speak;
I will testify against you, Israel:
I am God, your God.*
- ⁸ *I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices
or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before me.*
- ⁹ *I have no need of a bull from your stall
or of goats from your pens,*
- ¹⁰ *for every animal of the forest is mine,
and the cattle on a thousand hills.*
- ¹¹ *I know every bird in the mountains,
and the insects in the fields are mine.*
- ¹² *If I were hungry I would not tell you,
for the world is mine, and all that is in it.*
- ¹³ *Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?*
- ¹⁴ *“Sacrifice thank offerings to God,
fulfill your vows to the Most High,*
- ¹⁵ *and call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”*
- ¹⁶ *But to the wicked person, God says:*
- “What right have you to recite my laws
or take my covenant on your lips?*
- ¹⁷ *You hate my instruction
and cast my words behind you.*
- ¹⁸ *When you see a thief, you join with him;
you throw in your lot with adulterers.*
- ¹⁹ *You use your mouth for evil
and harness your tongue to deceit.*
- ²⁰ *You sit and testify against your brother*

and slander your own mother's son.
²¹ *When you did these things and I kept silent,
you thought I was exactly like you.
But I now arraign you
and set my accusations before you.*
²² *“Consider this, you who forget God,
or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you:*
²³ *Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor me,
and to the blameless I will show my salvation.”*

Introduction

In life we are constantly preoccupied. There are so many things that need our attention and there so many distractions that compete for our attention. Much of our thinking centres around us, what we want, experience, think and feel. Do we have time for God, do we think about Him? If we do, what do we think of Him? Is He a much-needed distraction or should He have all our attention?

The psalmist cannot afford to leave God out. God has acted and spoken in history. God has revealed Himself to him. Yahweh is at the centre of everything. The Lord made all things, gives life to all things and rules over all things. Nothing in life and in this world makes sense without God. It is the Lord who gives meaning and purpose in life.

When Israel forgets the Lord and replaces the Lord with an idol or an inferior idea of who He is, the Lord would send His prophets to call His people to come back to Him in true worship. God will not remain silent. He will put us on the stand and charge us.

Isaiah 1:3

³ *The ox knows its master, the donkey its owner's manger,
but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.”*

Hosea 4:1

¹ *Hear the word of the Lord, you Israelites,
because the Lord has a charge to bring
against you who live in the land:
“There is no faithfulness, no love,
no acknowledgment of God in the land.*

God would ask us:

- Why did we forget Him and leave Him out after all He has done for us?
- Why have we misrepresented Him and think less of Him even though He has revealed Himself to us?

In this Psalms the Lord charges His people in His court.

Judgment Begins in the House of the Lord

1 Peter 4:17

¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

⁵ "Gather to me this consecrated people, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

⁶ And the heavens proclaim his righteousness, for he is a God of justice.,

*⁷ "Listen, my people, and I will speak; I will testify against you, Israel:
I am God, your God.*

1. When we read the Gospels, one theme that stands out is how people responded to Jesus. As you read the stories of different people responding to Jesus, I am sure the Holy Spirit would ask of you where are you in the story. How would you respond to Jesus? Perhaps there were times the Lord would have asked you the question 'Who do you say I am?' How would you respond?
2. The point here is that there is an expectation on the followers of Jesus to rightly know Him and represent Him. The Lord would expect our choices and actions in life to reflect the close relationship He has established with us.
3. The people of Israel believed that they are safe because they appeal to God, but God turns the table on them and questions them. God brings charges against two groups of people that misrepresent Him:
 - a. People who have reduced worship to a ritual.
 - b. Hypocrites: People who pursue knowledge for the sake of knowledge. They know much but they will not obey.

Sacrifices and False Worship

*⁷ "Listen, my people, and I will speak;
I will testify against you, Israel:
I am God, your God.*

*⁸ I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices
or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before me.*

*⁹ I have no need of a bull from your stall
or of goats from your pens,
¹⁰ for every animal of the forest is mine,
and the cattle on a thousand hills.*

*¹¹ I know every bird in the mountains,
and the insects in the fields are mine.*

*¹² If I were hungry I would not tell you,
for the world is mine, and all that is in it.*

*¹³ Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?*

*¹⁴ "Sacrifice thank offerings to God,
fulfill your vows to the Most High,*

*¹⁵ and call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you will honor me."*

1. God honours sacrifices but will not receive sacrifices given with a wrong attitude.
2. Sacrifice is not a transfer of property. They are not to give with the thinking that they are giving God something that belongs to them. God owns everything.
3. They believe God needs their sacrifices. It is clear that the Lord does not need their sacrifices.
4. They are to give sacrifices because they are grateful to God.
5. They must seek God in prayer because they need Him and must depend on Him. He does not depend on their sacrifices.

The Hypocrites

¹⁶ But to the wicked person, God says:

*“What right have you to recite my laws
or take my covenant on your lips?*

¹⁷ You hate my instruction

and cast my words behind you.

¹⁸ When you see a thief, you join with him;

you throw in your lot with adulterers.

¹⁹ You use your mouth for evil

and harness your tongue to deceit.

²⁰ You sit and testify against your brother

and slander your own mother's son.

²¹ When you did these things and I kept silent,

you thought I was exactly like you.

But I now arraign you

and set my accusations before you.

1. This group of people recite the law diligently but they:
 - Hate the instruction
 - Cast my words behind you
 - Join the wicked
 - Judge others while practicing evil
2. When the Lord kept silent, they thought the Lord was like them. What does this mean?
Should God's silence be understood as consent? Must God punish us instantly to prove His words to be true?

Prayer

1. The Lord is our Righteous Judge
2. Taking our faith seriously
3. Who is Jesus to us?
4. Giving the Lord the due reverence and honour

Church

1. Ministries: Wisdom and guidance for the coming season
2. Outreach: God will help us reach out to the lost and the hurting
3. Blessing and favour over every person
4. Wisdom and Grace to lead in the marketplace
5. God will guide us as we plan and restart our physical services
6. We will take time to praise and worship the Lord with grateful hearts
7. We will come to the Lord in prayer as His children, called and loved by Him
8. Discernment and courage to lead and bear witness where ever the Lord has placed us

Covid19

1. Healing
2. Protection
3. Economic recovery
4. Wisdom and guidance in making decisions about resuming physical meetings and activities

Malaysia

1. Godly leadership
2. Healing for the nation
3. God will restore the economy
4. Justice, Compassion and Mercy (Especially towards the poor, foreigners and the weak)
5. Racial reconciliation
6. God will convict the hearts of people of the damage that greed and corruption brings to the nation. (Rakyat)
7. The church will rise in unity to declare the Good News

