

May 14 — It's Not All About Us!

READ

Psalms 103, 108-110, 122, 124

Psalm 110, "The Lord says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. 'The Lord will extend Your mighty scepter from Zion, saying, 'Rule in the midst of your enemies!' ... The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind: 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.' ... He will crush kings on the day of his wrath. He will judge the nations ... and so He will lift His head high."

THINK

Wow! There is a lot to unpack from the reading above — and the wording itself is rather confusing. But, first, we must understand that David wrote this prophetic Psalm about Christ. In fact, Jesus referenced this Psalm to prove His identity as the Son of God, equal in power and glory to the Father. Verse one is also quoted over 25 times in the New Testament!

So, what can we glean about Jesus from today's reading? First, we see that He sits at the right hand of God — a place of ultimate honor. And He continues to fight for us as God makes His enemies a "footstool" for His feet.

The second aspect is His supreme power and authority. "The Lord will extend Your mighty scepter" illustrates this. People in the highest ruling positions held these rod-like objects as a symbol of their dominion over others.

Third, we see that He is our high priest. We can't even fathom how much He intercedes for us and provides spiritual sustenance in our lives.

Finally, we see that He will someday return as He "lifts His head high" to gather God's children and bring judgment upon the wicked.

What do we most gain from reading this Psalm? It's understanding that life isn't about us — we are a part of Christ's story! We play supporting roles, but He is the star. He reigns supreme. Too often, though, we try to sit on the thrones of our lives, but we were never meant to. When we surrender control to Christ, we are freed from trying to do what only He can. So, dethrone yourself and trust that the almighty King of kings has Your life in His loving hands.

PRAY

Christ, You alone reign supreme! Convict my heart when I try to sit on the throne of my life. I surrender all that I am to Your lordship. Amen.

May 15 — Search Me

READ

Psalms 131, 133, 138-141, 145

Psalm 139:23a, "Search me and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

THINK

What if all of your thoughts, actions, and motivations were broadcast on a screen for everyone to see? Scary, right? In today's reading, David asks for that kind of transparency. He asks God to search every bit of his heart. God knew David's shortcomings, so why did David ask God to search him? The simple fact is, David wanted to know them as well. He wanted to expose and root out anything that displeased God at the deepest depths of his soul. Such vulnerability takes great courage. David's devotion and desire for understanding should encourage us to do the same. Not only was David asking God to reveal offenses, but he was also asking for guidance to rid himself of them altogether.

If we're brave enough to ask God to search us, what might He reveal? Bitterness? Jealousy? Selfish motives? Fear? Unforgiveness? Whenever He reveals our sins, it's the beginning of healing. Like David, are you willing to ask God to shine light into the deepest levels of your heart and make the necessary changes? Doing this allows you to draw nearer to God and increases your ability to hear His voice. And it will put a smile on His face because He wants nothing more than to lead you in the way everlasting!

PRAY

Dear God, Search my heart and reveal to me anything that is holding me back. Forgive me for my selfishness and sin. Remove any hardened attitudes and help me to live in a way that brings honor to Your name. Amen.

May 16 — Truly Awe-Inspiring

READ

Psalms 144-145, 88-89

Psalm 144: 3, 9 "O Lord, what are human beings that You should notice them, mere mortals that You should think about them? ... I will sing a new song to You, my God; on the ten-stringed lyre, I will make music to You."

THINK

When we consider the vastness of the universe, it can be a little overwhelming. Suddenly, we seem so small and perhaps insignificant comparatively. And yet, Genesis 1:27 says that God chose humankind over ALL His creation to be his image-bearers. So, when we get lost in our thoughts and feel as if we don't measure up in the grand scheme of life, we must remember that the Creator of the universe was extremely intentional about making us all His uniquely crafted, one-of-a-kind design masterpieces. This is truly awe-inspiring on every level!

In Psalm 144, David had just exalted God's great strength and victory. Then suddenly, he, too, seems dumbfounded that the Almighty, Sovereign Lord would have interest in him, or for that matter, humanity, in general. He is amazed by each new victory and deliverance from his enemies. Therefore, just as God's mercy renews at the break of every dawn, his praise of God should be renewed each day also.

There's a song that states, "My best friend's the Creator of the universe." God not only created us, but He also desires to have personal intimacy with us, to be our best friend. Today, welcome that relationship and be in awe of God's creation. Let Him put a new song of gratitude in your heart and praise Him. Remember that He sees you, He hears you, and He loves you. Walk in His purpose and allow His light to shine through you for all to see.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your creation and for giving me a significant role as Your image-bearer. Fill my heart with a new song of gratitude as I praise You in all I do. Shine Your light through me. In Jesus 'name, Amen.

May 17 — Clean Your Glasses!

READ

Psalm 50, 73-74

Psalm 73:17a, 28, "Then I went into your sanctuary, O God... But as for me, how good it is to be near God! I have made the Sovereign Lord my shelter, and I will tell everyone about the wonderful things You do."

THINK

No one likes wearing filthy glasses. It impedes vision, and who doesn't want to see clearly?

In today's reading, the psalmist, Asaph, is confused and frustrated about those who do evil and are still allowed to prosper by God. It's a question maybe you've even asked at some point. But as Asaph wondered this, his spiritual vision was obstructed. It wasn't until he went into the sanctuary of God that his lenses became clean and he could see the matter clearly from God's perspective, from an eternal point of view.

We may never have all our questions answered, like why evil people prosper and good people suffer, but we can ask God to wipe our dirty glasses clean to see things from His perspective. And just as Asaph found that clarity, we, too, can find that same clarity in God's House. The church is a special place; it's the Bride of Christ. Are you ignoring the truth and wisdom found there, or are you running to it? Run to His House. Take off your dirty glasses. Ask God to wipe away your messy perspective and see things through His lenses — then, you will gain His eternal perspective.

PRAY

Dear God, Thank You for this reminder of the importance of seeking Your point of view and for Your church. Help me to work to see things from Your eternal perspective. Amen.

May 18 — A Throne Doesn't Make You King

READ

Psalm 75-78

Psalm 75:6-7, 9, "No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt themselves. It is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another. As for me, I will declare this forever; I will sing praise to the God of Jacob...."

THINK

For \$1,500 on Amazon, you can buy a very ornate black and gold throne. But even if you purchase it and live in a castle, sitting on a throne doesn't make you royal or give you a kingdom.

All of us have times when we live as if we are the king sitting on the throne of our own lives. But God alone is ultimately in command of heaven and earth, and it's His judgment that matters. Even in the lives of the biblical power players such as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David, we see moments when they were exalted and moments when they were brought low. But even in their greatest moments, they never reigned supreme.

Even Jesus, on the Sunday before His death, was praised as He entered Jerusalem for the last time. But by Friday, He was deserted and betrayed; He was crucified on a cross — a death reserved for the worst of criminals. But He showed that He was more than a man. On the third day, He rose again to ultimate victory! Christ, the Son of God, is the sovereign judge! He reigns supreme!

Whatever your position — man-made throne to sit on or not — surrender your life to the King of kings. In high times or low, allow Jesus to sit on the throne of your life!

PRAY

Lord, When it seems like chaos abounds, remind me that You are not blind to the circumstances and situations around me. Whether I am exalted or brought low, let me always trust in You and sing Your praise! Amen.

May 19 — Release and Receive

READ

Psalm 79-82

Psalm 80:3, *“Restore us, O God; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.”*

THINK

There is nothing more satisfying than an ice-cold glass of water on a hot summer day! It refreshes and restores us, giving us the strength to get up and go again! The same is true when the heat is turned up in our lives. Trials can sometimes beat us down and wear us thin. Daily stressors can be so overwhelming that it’s difficult to relax. That’s when we need to turn to God so that He can restore us.

So, how do we do that? First, start your day by asking Him to help you carry the situations and circumstances that are weighing you down. Then, ask Him for wisdom and perspective as you navigate your day. Finally, end your day by trusting Him to take care of the things you can’t control. His eyes are on you every moment, He never turns His face away. And, He is our Living Water who wants to nourish your parched soul to restore you for another day.

PRAY

Lord, Thank You for giving me the strength to face each day. Replenish my thirsty soul and shine Your light in my life. And help me to do the same in the lives of others! Amen.

May 20 — The Gift of Wisdom

READ

Psalm 83

1 Chronicles 29:23-25

2 Chronicles 1:1-13

1 Kings 2:13-3:15

1 Kings 3:5, *“At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, ‘Ask for whatever you want Me to give you.’”*

THINK

Imagine this happens to you: The all-powerful God of the universe comes to you personally and gives you the chance to ask for anything. What an exciting opportunity! Already you may think of the financial security and success you could attain, the illness in the family you’d want to be healed, or even how you might “cheat the system” by asking for additional wishes to be granted.

King Solomon, however, asked for none of those things. He did not treat God as some genie in a bottle to be exploited for personal gain. Instead, he approached God with humility and asked only for a wise and discerning heart to better serve and govern his people. And because his answer was not a selfish desire for wealth or long life, God did what Solomon asked — and gave him those personal benefits he did not ask for.

When we put God first, when we put God’s will before personal gain, He will bless us. The more we pour out to God, the more He pours out to us. The blessings we receive will not always be material, but living for the Lord will always result in a deeper and stronger relationship with Him. And that is by far the most valuable blessing we could ever receive!

PRAY

Dear Lord, I ask for Your discernment today. Help me put Your will above my own and to serve You with my whole heart. Thank You for Your provision and for all the blessings You have poured out on me. Amen!