

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 101 – Give Ear To Wisdom Through Acceptable Sacrifices (Psalms 49-51)

1. Did the Psalmist desire to share wisdom only with those who were highly esteemed in society?

No: “(1) *Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:* (2) **Both low and high, rich and poor, together.** (3) *My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding*” (Psalms 49:1-3).

2. Before the Psalmist would open his dark sayings upon the harp, what did he first have to do?

He first had to listen before he could teach: “**I will incline mine ear to a parable:** *I will open my dark saying upon the harp*” (Psalms 49:4).

Consider also: “(1) *Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.* (2) *I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:* (3) *Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.* (4) *We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done*” (Psalms 78:1-4).

When considering what a dark [hidden] message is, consider: “(6) *To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings... That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world*” (Proverbs 1:6 and Matthew 13:35).

3. Since the Psalmist had decided to hear and share wisdom, did he fear the days of evil?

No: “*Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about*” (Psalms 49:5)?

Consider: “*If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small*” (Proverbs 24:10).

4. Can a wealthy person have redemption through his/her wealth?

No: “(6) *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;* (7) *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:* (8) *(For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)* (9) *That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption*” (Psalms 49:6-9).

“*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*” (Matthew 16:26)?

“*Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*” (Matthew 20:28).

“*And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! (25) It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*” (Mark 10:23-25).

“*Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time*” (I Timothy 2:6).

“*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*” (I Timothy 6:17).

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (I Peter 1:18-19).

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:17-19).

5. Is death a respecter of persons?

No: *“For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. (10) For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. (11) Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. (12) Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. (13) This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah. (14) Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling” (Psalms 49:10-14).*

While many think their possessions will go on forever, they ignore the fact that they’ll be left to others (**Proverbs 11:4, Proverbs 23:5, Ecclesiastes 5:13-16, and Luke 12:20**).

6. With the reality of death, what do we have to look forward to?

“But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah” (Psalms 49:15).

We hope in eternity (**John 14:1-3 and Hebrews 13:14**).

7. Why should we not be moved when others prosper and are made rich?

We should not be envious when others prosper because we understand those things are not the eternal blessings we hope in, but rather they are temporary: *“(16) Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; (17) For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him. (18) Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. (19) He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. (20) Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish” (Psalms 49:16-20).*

You can be wealthy here, but you cannot take it with you (**Job 1:21 and I Timothy 6:6-10**).

8. Does God try to silently judge His people?

No: *“(1) The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and **called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.** (2) Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, **God hath shined.** (3) Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. (4) **He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.** (5) Gather my saints together unto me; those that*

have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. (6) **And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself.** Selah” (Psalms 50:1-6).

9. Was God going to correct His people concerning their burnt offerings?

No: “(8) **I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings,** to have been continually before me. (9) I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. (10) For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. (11) I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. (12) If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. (13) Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? (14) **Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High**” (Psalms 50:8-14).

10. What does Psalms 50:15 tell us about the current faithfulness of those being addressed in this context?

That they are faithful (**Proverbs 11:8; 21, I Samuel 22:2, Psalms 37:25, Psalms 94:14, Psalms 145:19, Romans 8:28; 31, and Hebrews 13:5-6**).

God does not hear the cries of the unfaithful (**Deuteronomy 31:16-18, Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 15:29, Proverbs 28:9, Isaiah 59:1-3, Jeremiah 5:25, Ezekiel 39:23-24, Micah 3:4, John 9:31, and I Peter 3:12**).

Verse sixteen shows a change in context from addressing the righteous to addressing the wicked.

11. Do the wicked listen to God’s instructions?

NO: “(16) *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? (17) Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee*” (Psalms 50:16-17).

12. What does Psalms 50:18 show us concerning the company we keep?

You are partaking in the deeds of those you run with: “*When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst [approves; runs] with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers*” (Psalms 50:18).

13. Give two Scriptures, outside of our current context, which teach us not to partake in the sins of others?

(**Numbers 5:2-3, Numbers 25:1-9, Joshua 7:1, I Corinthians 5, I Corinthians 15:33, Galatians 5:7-9, Ephesians 5:7-11, I Timothy 5:22, II John 9-11, and Revelation 18:1-4**).

14. Were the wicked individuals in our study guarding their tongues?

No, they were sinning with their tongues: “(19) *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. (20) Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son*” (Psalms 50:19-20).

See also: **Psalms 5:9; 10:7; 12:2-3; 36:3-4; Isaiah 59:3-4, Hosea 4:2, and Romans 3:13-14**.

We need to guard our tongues (**Proverbs 10:19, Psalms 34:13, Psalms 39:1, Ecclesiastes 5:1-2, Matthew 12:35-37, and James 1:19-20**).

15. Though some may think God’s silence equates to approval, is that true?

No, and God does not remain silent forever: *“These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes” (Psalms 50:21).*

16. Does the fiftieth Psalm end with a soft warning to the wicked?

No: *“(22) Now consider this, ye that forget God, **lest I tear you in pieces**, and there be none to deliver. (23) Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God” (Psalms 50:22-23).*

17. Does the first five verses of Psalms fifty-one teach that children are born sinners?

No, in fact the Psalmist declares that he has committed sin, not that he was born that way: *“(1) Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. (2) Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. (3) For **I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.** (4) **Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:** that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. (5) Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalms 50:1-5).*

Clearly, you are not born a sinner (**Deuteronomy 24:16, Ecclesiastes 7:29, Ezekiel 28:15, and Romans 2:5-6**).

18. Who did the Psalmist look to for purification?

God: *“(6) Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. (7) Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (8) Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. (9) Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. (10) Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. (11) Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. (12) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit” (Psalm 51:6-12).*

Keep in mind, the Psalmist has the Spirit (v. 11), which allows for direct work (**II Peter 1:20-21** and **I John 2:27**).

19. Did the Psalmist look to instruct others before or after his corrections were made?

After: *“(13) **Then** will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee” (Psalms 51:13; cf. **Matthew 7:1-5, I Corinthians 9:27, I Timothy 4:16, and James 3:1**).*

20. Did the Psalmist desire to praise God?

Yes: *“(14) Deliver me from bloodguiltiness [guilt of bloodshed], O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. (15) O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise” (Psalms 51:14-15).*

21. Rather than meaningless sacrifices, what did God want most from His people?

*“(16) For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: **thou delightest not in burnt offering.** (17) **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise**” (Psalms 51:16-17).*

22. If God did His good pleasure unto Zion, what would be the result?

“(18) Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. (19) Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar” (Psalms 51:18-19).