



About what is God threatening members of His covenant people with a view to the coming judgment? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. Psalm 50 looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these twenty-three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that those who are God's covenant people through the sacrifice of Christ must not just give Him outward forms of worship, but the engagement of our needy hearts in that worship; and, we must give Him not just set times of worship but engagement with Him from the heart in all of our life.

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 • Read Psalm 50

Questions from the Scripture text: Who wrote this Psalm (superscript)? Who has spoken (v1a)? To whom (v1b) When/where (v1c)? Who is coming (v3a)? How does v2b describe this? From where will He come (v2a)? What will it be like/called at that time? And what will His coming from it be like (v3b-c)? What will He do from where to where (v4)? In order to do what? What does God command in v5a? What does He call them? On what basis are they saints, and on what basis are they to gather to Him (v5b)? Who/what declares what in this gathering (v6a)? About which role of God (v6b)? Whom does He command to do what in v7a? What speech will He make (v7b)? How does He begin (v7c)? For what is He not rebuking them at this point (v8a-b)? How frequently has this been done (v8c)? What doesn't God want (v9)? Why doesn't He need them (v10-11)? What impossibility does v12a suppose? What would God still not do? Why not (v12b)? What answer and tone does v13 expect? What two things does God command instead (v14a, b)? And what third (v15a)? What will He do (v15b)? With what result? Whom does God address now in v16a? What don't they have a right to do (v16b)? What else (v16c)? What does their rejection of the alone-way of the sacrifice of v5b prove about them (v17)? What commandment have they broken in v18a? And how? What commandment in v18b? How? What commandment in v19b? How does v19a describe this? Against whom have they done it (v20a)? Why is this so unnatural (v20b)? What perceptible response of God had there been (v21a)? What conclusion had they drawn from this (v21b)? But what will God do (v21c)? In what manner (v21d)? What are we doing, if we think like this (v22a)? And what does God command such ones to do? And if they fail to "consider" then what will God do (v22b)? And who can save from this (v22c)? What should we do, if we want to glorify God (v23a)? And what life will we then live (v23b)? And what reward will we then receive (v23c)?

Covenant Past.

This Psalm literally calls the church back to Sinai. Zion, in this case is the heavenly Zion (the perfection of beauty, v2), but when He comes to earth, "a fire devours before Him" (v3b), and it "exceedingly whirlwinds" (v3c). There, He gathers His saints, who have made covenant with Him by sacrifice (v5). Just three months prior to Ex 19-20, God had designated and bound them to Himself by the Passover lamb.

Covenant Future

Those things were the past, even for Asaph. He reminds us that the heavens still continuously declare His righteousness (v6a, cf. Ps 19). And he tells us that one of the reasons for this is that He is still Judge (v6b), and there is a reckoning coming.

The Psalm ends by saying "consider this" (v22-23). It demands to be considered, meditated upon. Why? Because those who do not think about the judgment to come will be "torn in pieces" by the living God (v22b), and who can deliver you from that (v22c)?

Apart from meditation upon His Word, we would forget God (v22a). In fact, the way that we are living now can expose to us that we are forgetting Him already. This is exactly why we need a Psalm that reminds us of His glory. One of the ways that God gives us grace to worship Him with reverence and awe is by reminding us that He is a consuming fire (cf. Heb 12:28-29).

Remembering God in the Present

Worship Him from the heart, not just externals (v7-15). Why did God command sacrifices? Not because He enjoys steak (v9a, 10b, 13a) or goat (v9b, 13b) or poultry (v11a). God isn't needy at all (v10-12)! He commands sacrifices because He wants the heart of worship: thanksgiving (v14a), and commitment (v14b), and our neediness/calling upon Him (v15a). He has no neediness, but is glorified by meeting us in our neediness (v15b).

Worship Him with the life, not just worship services (v16-21). Now the Lord addresses not just the "superficial" believer but the callously hypocritical. It's possible for believers to "declare God's statutes" (v16b) and "take God's covenant in their mouth" (v16c) and still be wicked (v16a).

There are those who as soon as they're done at worship and acting churchy (v16), they toss God's words aside (v17), and proceed to live against them. They're not the thief, but they look the other way for him (v18a). They're not the adulterers, but they take portions with them (v18b). They positively commit seemingly "little" sins like gossip or lying (v19), even against their near relations (v20).

Even though worship-goers have God's Word, they can misinterpret His patience as silence (v21a) and actually lull themselves into thinking that God is ok with how they live (v21b, cf. Rom 2:4)! But God will most certainly call every deed into account (v21c-d, cf. Rom 2:5, 16). If we are genuinely meeting Him in worship, then we will surely know that His holiness and justice will not ignore any sin!

Prepare to Meet Thy God

How, then, can we pursue giving God the heart and not just the lips, and giving God the life and not just the worship service? By giving praise from the heart (v23a) and ordering our conduct righteously (v23b), but especially by coming through the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (v5b, 23c). With Christ as our sacrifice and salvation, Even sinners such as we are will be called saints by God (v5a) and made saints by God!

How can you guard against just going through the motions in worship? What can you do to bring the glory of God and the Word of God out of the worship service and into the rest of your life? Are you ready to meet God?

Sample prayer: Lord, You are the Mighty One, the great I AM. And You gather Your saints now through the sacrifice of Christ, even as You will do again on the last, great day. Shine forth, O God! Do not be silent! Make Yourself known to us! And make us to offer You our hearts in thanksgiving. And make us to offer You our hearts in our commitments. And make us to offer You our hearts in our praying. And don't let us be forgetful of You, but make us to order our lives according to Your word and Your worship, which we ask through Christ, through whose sacrifice we are bound to You in covenant, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP49A "Hear This, All Earth's Nations" or TPH49 "Hear This, All You Peoples"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Psalm 50. These are the words of God, a psalm of Asaph, the mighty one. God, Yahweh has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to its going down out of Zion. The perfection of beauty God will shine forth. Our God shall come and shall not keep silent.

Shall devour before him and that shall be very tempestuous all around him. He shall call to the heavens from above and the earth that he may judge his people gather my saints together to me. Those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice, let the heavens declare His righteousness for God Himself is judge here.

O. My people and I will speak. Oh, Israel and I will testify against you. I am God. Your God, I will not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings, which are continually before me. I will not take a bowl from your house nor goats out of your folds, for every beast of the forest is mine and the cattle on a thousand hills.

I know all the birds of the mountains and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you for the world is mine and all its fullness. Well I eat the flesh of bowls or drink the blood of goats offer to God Thanksgiving and pay your vows to the most high call upon me.

And the day of trouble, I will deliver you and you shall glorify me. But to the wicked, God says What, right? Have you to declare my statutes or take my covenant in your mouth Seeing you hate instruction and cast my words. Behind you. When you saw a thief you consented with him and have been a partaker with adulterers, you give your mouth to evil and your tongue frames deceit.

You sit and speak against your brother. You slander your own mothers. Son these things you have done and I have kept silent. You thought that I was all together. Like you, but I will rebuke you and set them in order before your eyes. Now consider this you who forget God lest I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver whoever offers praise.

Glorifies me and to him who orders his conduct, right? I will show the salvation of God So far the reading of God's inspired and generant where it

Now, some of you might have noticed, while we were reading verse 3, that this Psalm takes us back to Sinai. And he says our God shall come and shall not keep silent. And you remember how noisy Sinai was with the mountain shaking and then the thundering. And then the trumpets that was already very loud.

And it didn't grow quiet or did it. What happened to it? It grew louder and louder and then the voice of God himself from the mountain. Our God shall come and not keep silent a fire. Shall devour before him Remember the whole mountain burning and it's smoke going up like a furnace, and it shall be very tempestuous.

All around him, like a great whirlwind or storm. Psalm 50, of course, happens after Sinai. And so God is reminding His people just who it is, who has brought them into covenant with himself. He begins by saying,

Verse in verse 5, gather. My saints together to me those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. He reminds us that the only way to come safely near such a God is through sacrifice and God had done that for Israel hadn't. He the day that they left exit the day that they left Egypt.

In the Exodus, was the day of a great sacrifice in which the Passover lamb had been slaughtered and its blood had covered the people of Israel. And yet even coming with the blood, having covered them, they come to the mountain and they tremble because there is a greater meeting with God, coming.

Still Psalm 50 being way later than Exodus 11. And 12 reminds us. That God is still a consuming fire. Hebrews 12 says that at Sinai, got just shook the earth, but now he is shaking the heavens and the earth, the time for this creation is limited. Peter tells us that the heavens and the earth will be burned with fire and melted to their elements before, then you heavens and the new earth are made from them.

Very similar to how many whose bodies will be resurrected. In the last day, there are bodies are destroyed before that as they are corrupted and eaten by worms and so forth. And so the display that God made of himself at Sinai was not the greatest display of his holiness and of His glory.

It was a great display of his holiness and His glory to remind us of the greatness of Him to whom we draw near every Lord's day in the public worship especially in this life. But even now, as we worship Him, and as I thought about teaching, you this and in the worship, it's why the when praying at the beginning of our worship time, it was so important to me to ask God to receive us through Christ and to help us to reverence him from the heart.

So Hebrews says, doesn't it in response to God? Being the one who shakes heaven and earth and is a consuming fire. That we would have grace to worship him with reverence and all, but even our gathering to him now and even the greater gatherings to him that we have in the assembly on the Lord's Day.

Even those are just four tastes and hints of the great gathering on the last day. And so the covenant passed of Passover and Exodus and Sinai points us forward to the covenant future. When God gathers, his people to himself and the heavens, declare his righteousness and God Himself, the Lord Jesus, God himself judges.

And one of the things that the heavens do for us now, is they remind us how small we are and how great he is and Psalmate. We look at the heavens and we see his handiwork and we say what is man that you are mindful of him, how small we are.

And Psalm 19 the heavens declare, the glory of God and how great he is. That's why in the last half of Psalm 19. It talks not about what his world says about him. But what His words says about him and what is word does, for us converting us bringing us to faith in Jesus Christ.

So that we will have a safety that stands in the last day, but there's a problem. Even for those who know this about the Lord, when we come to worship him and really, there's two problems, that are treated at some length. In this Psalm, one is in verses 7 through 15 which treats the temptation to worship God just in externals.

Just in the activities. Just in the particular things that we say and do and can even grow accustomed to saying and doing, which makes it easier for us to just kind of shut down our mind or shut down our heart. And then the second danger is that we would worship him in the worship service, and then go out and sin against him in the life.

So the first danger of worshipping him and just externals. He says, I will not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings which are continually before me. I will not take a bowl from your house nor goats from out of your folds, for every beast of the forest is mine.

The cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, the wild beasts of the field are mine, if I were hungry. I would not tell you for the world of mine. The world is mine and all its fullness, Of course, it's insane. Isn't it to think that God gets hungry because God is not needy.

He doesn't need our worship any more than he needs steak or go to meet or poultry. God doesn't need anything. Sometimes when we feel that we really want to give unto God. We think that if we just add more and more and more worship times or more and more activities to each worship time, that this will somehow improve the worship of God, but he doesn't want the external forms.

He wants our hearts and not because he needs them but because we need him offer to God. So he says he doesn't need flesh of bowls or blood of goats, then, he says offer to God. And now, he's now he no not what he needs, he doesn't need anything, but what is it that he wants from us offer to God?

Thanksgiving a thankful heart. What does a thankful heart say you? I was needy and you met my need. You are the one who did me, good. I'm not the one who does you? Good. If we think that we do, God favors by our worship then and this is really gross to say out loud, isn't it?

But this is what's implied in our hearts. If we think that we do God favors by worshipping Him Then, we think he should say. Thank you and we're done. He says, no you offered a god thanksgiving, which means you are the needy one and he did you the good.

Number two, pay your vows to the most high. Make your commitments to him in your worship. See that? You are needy of the thing that will bind you to do what is right that we are unfaithful people. We know what we ought to do but we don't do it And so he gives us as part of worshipping Him to hear his word and engage him in it and be making promises commitments to Him.

Pay your vows to the most high Call upon me in the day of trouble. This is the the other side of Thanksgiving, right? Thanksgiving is when he has met your need calling upon him in the day of trouble is telling him that you have a need. And so one of the great parts, one of the great aspects of worship is recognizing from the heart that God is God.

And is not needy and that we are not God and are very needy and therefore thanking him and making commitment to him and crying out to him. And the last one is, at the end of the Psalm. When he ties the all of it together in verse 23 offering him.

Praise whoever offers praise. Glorifies me. It's a great mistake to think that Well, in the Old Testament, they worshiped with externals. And now, in the New Testament, we worship with internal, so we worship spiritually. No, He wanted spiritual worship in the Old Testament, even when the externals of worship looked forward to Christ by shadows and pictures and there are externals and worship.

Now, Those particular actions on earth that are led by Christ in heaven, and we can be just as heartless and mindless and thankless and commitment, less, and praise less in the worship actions that he's given us. I hope well we could be just as bad as any unthinking unfeeling unpraising.

Unthanking uncommitting themselves Jew. Who is being rebuked. Not because they weren't bringing bulls and goats but because they weren't bringing their hearts with the bulls. And the goats Psalm 50 is not describing an old danger that has passed, In fact, with less externals. We are more exposed. If we sing or pray or read, or hear preaching, or take the supper, without offering the hearts to God in Thanksgiving's and commitments and callings upon him and praises.

And so the first temptation, he addresses here is the temptation to worship him just an externals and not from the heart. The second temptation is to worship him in the worship service and then to go out and live our lives in contradiction to his law. Note that verse 16 is not addressing the wicked outside of the church.

It's addressing wicked people who declare his statutes Perhaps even they not only have worship in the church, but they'd go outside and they have arguments about theology or discussions. They like to say discussions shooting matches theology. What right? Have you to take my covenant in your mouth? So these are not even you know, the kind of Christians who who go to worship at flimsy?

Flabby worship churches, where it's all boyfriend stuff, These are Christians who repeat the Bible and have doctrine and talk about the covenant. And yet. They are Christians who talk about those things for everyone else but for themselves. Everything's really flexible. You know, they see a thief and they're not offended at the stealing.

They're okay with benefiting from that theft, you know, they know that someone is sexually immoral an adulterer but they don't want to seem judgy So they conveniently avoid that subject. They themselves are given to gossip verse. 19 is very descriptive your tongue frames deceit. This is someone who says someone who doesn't themselves gossip and I find this temptation all the time, but you're there.

They're the their tongue doesn't flat out. Tell the lie, it tells just enough truth things that are calculated to get the other one to believe the lie, You sit and speak against your brother. And slander your own mother's son. And how much worse when this is a brother in Christ one?

Who shares? Not the blood of the mother but the blood of the Savior. And yet, the blood of the Savior is not precious enough to keep us. Um, from slandering. And so God does not accept the worship of those who have no regard for his law. Now it's different to be someone who is resisting these things, and hating these things and trying to kill these things by his grace and constantly needing forgiveness, then your worship in God, and the life just like you're worshipping Him and the worship service, You're not sinless in the worship service either.

Are you you're constantly asking him? Oh, Lord. I have not been thankful stir up my thankfulness throughout my thankfulness. Oh Lord, I've been worshipping now for 40 minutes and I haven't lifted my heart to you in a single commitment. Stir out my heart towards you to to pay my vows, Oh Lord, I've been going through the motions now for the last.

Yeah, three minutes of praying forgotten. How needy I am. Haven't even been following along. I'm needy of knowing my neediness. So he's not talking about those who have imperfect lives because nobody even has the perfect worship. He's talking about those whose regard for interacting with the Lord, from the heart stops at the benediction and then the rest of their life is rules, maybe but every rule has its way around it.

Indulge this sinful tendencies of their hearts. They've kept their hearts from God in the workshop. And now, even if they're trying to satisfy themselves and look good to others and maybe even look good to their own conscience by rule. Keeping in the life. They've kept their hearts from God and the life but God demands the whole man.

He says, don't think that just as horrible things haven't happened to you, that he's not bringing these things under judgment. Look at verse 21. These things you

have done and I kept silent and you thought that I was all together. Like, you don't think that just because you've gotten away with maintaining a certain kind of life or a superficiality and worship or not dealing with God from the heart throughout your day and everything that you do, don't don't think that just because you've gotten away with it for a while that God is okay with it.

It's helpful here to for me to read you from Romans 2. And I think it's around verse 5, verse 4 and verse 5 because he says the same thing there.

And I'm gonna start in verse 3. Do you think this? Oh man you who judge those? Practicing such things. You who take my statutes in your mouth and take my covenant in your mouth? You, who judge those, who practice practicing such things and doing the same that you will escape the judgment of God.

I kept silent you thought that I was all together. Like you, you thought you were gonna escape verse 4 or you despise the riches of his goodness forbearance and longsuffering. And those two words, forbearance and long suffering mean the wrath of God, didn't incinerate you the first moment that you weren't wholehearted towards him.

And we can just kind of carelessly go along in our life because God is being forbearing because God is being long-suffering, even in his Fatherly discipline, he doesn't always immediately drop the fullness of of the heavenly sanking. Upon us and we ought to learn something from that as fathers that you don't have to drop the, you know, the full measure of justifiable discipline, every time your child does something wrong.

Do you despise the riches of His goodness forbearance and lungs suffering instead of saying? Well I haven't really been wholehearted towards God and hadn't gotten so bad yet. God must be okay with it. We should say look at how half-hearted I have been towards God and how patient and merciful he has been towards me, isn't he worthy of my whole heartedness So verse 4 Do you despise the riches of his goodness forbearance and long suffering?

Not knowing that the goodness of God, leads you to repentance but in accordance with your hardness and your impenant and tarked, you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds.

And of course, this includes our hearts in verse 16, he concludes the discussion. We won't go through the entire thing in Romans 2 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. According to my gospel on these been speaking, in the previous verses about the law of God, written on the hearts.

And so he comes, he says to us in. Psalm 50 verse 21. These things you have done and I kept silent You thought that I was all together, like you. But I will rebuke you and set them in order before your eyes.

Some sins in and of themselves. And by several aggravations are more heinous in the sight of God than others. That's what we confess. Some of you have memorized that in your catechism, The sin of having been in the worship of God, and among the people of God and having had the knowledge of God's Word and God's covenant, and still disregarding them, not living this life of repenting and believing.

That's one of those several aggravations that can make it more heinous than others. And God will rebuke and set before our eyes, even that he says, and some 50 verse 21. And so, while the patients of God was meant to lead us to repentance. So also of course are the corrections of God.

He says in verse 22. Consider this. You forget God, lest I tear you in pieces and there'll be none to deliver whoever offers praise. Glorifies me. Don't forget God in the worship of God. Give him the heart. Not just the outward actions. Whoever offers praise, glorifies me and to him who orders his conduct to write.

Don't forget God in the way that you live. Don't just make your capable set of rules and start checking the boxes. Walk with him from the heart, obey him from the heart, order your conduct. According to his word, not. According to what you feel like getting away with that, you can use his word or twist his word to justify.

So, don't forget God in the worship. Don't forget God in the life. Whoever offers praise. Glorifies me and to him who orders his conduct the right. I will show the salvation of God. Oh man let's pray Father, thank you for this Psalm. It's hard for us and some respects to study it together, because we know how much we have run a foul both and your worship.

And in our life of offering you the heart and it's Grievous to you and grievous to us as well. That your word describes such moments in our worshiping in such moments in our living as a forgetting of you that we are forgetting. Even the first commandment that our having anything else in your place at all, is something that is against your face because we're always before you and whatever we're doing.

We're doing unto your face So help us O Lord how we thank you. That Christ never for a moment and worshiping we're living was forgetful of you in any way. Receive him as our righteousness since you have provided him to be our righteousness. Receive his sacrifice to put away our guilt since he is your son, God with you from all eternity full of glory.

And his sacrifices great enough to turn even for these sins and help us by your spirit. Make us to be like the Lord Jesus help us. Even now, as we are praying to offer ourselves to you genuinely and from the heart offering not just the external actions. But all that we are and then grant to us as we go from this worship to live that way before you as well for, we ask it in Jesus name Amen