

Harvest Community this week

Wednesday, September 30

7p – Prayer Meeting, Psalm 44:17-26

The Lord's Day, October 4

9a – Exodus Bible Class for all ages

10a – Worship. Heb 7:18-19; Mark 10:17-45; Gen 26:1-33

11:30a – Fellowship Meal

6p – Worship. Ps 147:7-11; Jer 21; Rom 9:30-10:4; The Lord's Supper; Bob Hilbelink leading.

Wednesday, October 7

7p – Prayer Meeting, Psalm 45:1-9

September Servants' Rotation: Greeting—De Haans; Coffee—Hibmas; Cry Room—Postema; Cleaning—Vander Plaats

You may contact Harvest by phone (712-395-0983), email (church@harvestoc.net), or post (209 1st St. NE, OC, Iowa, 51041).

If you would like information, prayer, counsel, or some other assistance please contact one of our elders:

Craig De Haan (712-395-8822, craig@harvestoc.net)

Mark Fedders (712-441-5096, mark@harvestoc.net)

James Hakim (712-395-0983, james@harvestoc.net)

Russ Herman (712-737-7450, russ@harvestoc.net)

Bob Hilbelink (712-441-3925, bob@harvestoc.net)

Matt Van Essendelft (712-727-3188, mattve@harvestoc.net)

Gary Vander Hart (712-722-2597, garyvh@harvestoc.net)

Gary Vander Plaats (712-278-1038, garyvp@harvestoc.net)

<http://harvestoc.net>

the midweek prayer meeting · 30 September 2009

Devotional · Singing · Prayer · Doxology

Psalm 44:17-26

- ¹⁷All this has come upon us,
though we have not forgotten you,
and we have not been false to your covenant.
- ¹⁸Our heart has not turned back,
nor have our steps departed from your way;
- ¹⁹yet you have broken us in the place of jackals
and covered us with the shadow of death.
- ²⁰If we had forgotten the name of our God
or spread out our hands to a foreign god,
²¹would not God discover this?
For he knows the secrets of the heart.
- ²²Yet for your sake we are killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.
- ²³Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever!
- ²⁴Why do you hide your face?
Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?
- ²⁵For our soul is bowed down to the dust;
our belly clings to the ground.
- ²⁶Rise up; come to our help!
Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!

Devotional

*17 All this has come upon us,
though we have not forgotten you,
and we have not been false to your covenant.*

*18 Our heart has not turned back,
nor have our steps departed from your way;*

*19 yet you have broken us in the place of jackals
and covered us with the shadow of death.*

There is only one man of whom these words have ever been true in an absolute sense. How kind, and loving, and careful of the Father to provide His Son, in His humanity, with words and songs and prayers for Him to think and sing and speak in His sinlessness! It is of the same Fatherly love that designed the psalter to be inerrantly written by sinners, so that we who have sin might have perfect and reliable things to think and speak and sing and pray!

In the original context, however, it is evident that vv17-18 are the cry that comes from a clear conscience before God. All their sin has been repented of and atoned for. They have turned from every wickedness that they know of and have kept the sacrifices and festivals to God. They have ruled out *unrepentance* as a possible cause of their current circumstances.

*20 If we had forgotten the name of our God
or spread out our hands to a foreign god,*

21 would not God discover this?

For he knows the secrets of the heart.

The word for “discover” in v21 helps us understand what these verses are saying. It means “to search out,” often by way of cross-examination—the idea is to examine someone in a way that makes his sin visible to himself and others.

And this is exactly what believers hope and expect God will always be doing with our sins. The psalmist is assuming that in the sanctification process, God will not bring the nation under great judgment for a sin, without proceeding to ferret it out for them to see (much as He did with Achan). They’ve been crying out to God, and no sin has been exposed.

*22 Yet for your sake we are killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.*

So confident is the psalmist that God is faithful to show us our sin if we are suffering for it, that he is now able to draw a conclusion about why he is suffering: it must be for God’s sake. Because we are privy to Job 1:7-12 and 2:1-7, we know that this was the truth about Job’s suffering.

Job pleaded to know it and was never directly told, but here the psalmist arrives at that knowledge by arguing from the perfect justice and faithfulness of God. We must be suffering purely for the sake of God! When we studied Romans 8’s use of this, we concluded that the confidence that believers have for God, and their love for Him, actually leads them to count it a privilege and joy if *for His sake* they are granted to suffer.

This is but our lesser reflection of what Christ’s heart was perfectly like—not that He did not love us and give Himself up for us; He did!—in that the greatest joy He ever had was wrapped up in His greatest anguish, by which He would put on most spectacular and simultaneous display the glories of the Father’s justice and wrath and love and mercy.

23 Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord?

Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever!

24 Why do you hide your face?

Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust;

our belly clings to the ground.

26 Rise up; come to our help!

Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!

The psalmist, of course, is not under any illusion that God has actually rejected or forgotten His people, any more than he is under the illusion that God has a body or gets tired or slumbers.

These anthropomorphisms (attributing human physical traits to God) and anthropopathisms (attributing human emotions to God) come from a confidence that God acts in time according to His perfect wisdom, but a frank acknowledgment that the space-time in between those actions feels to us like His sleeping or rejecting or hiding.

The prayer, “Awake! ... Rouse Yourself! ... Rise up ! ... Come to our help!” assumes that God is actually pleased to operate His time schedule through our prayers and in response to our prayers. He delights to use means. He delights to operate in relationship. And these pleasures of His are gracious and generous, for they elevate us to co-laborers with Himself (cf. Phil 2:12-13).

vv25-26 take us back to the Garden. The complaint in v25 is that to this point they seem to be receiving the curse of defeat assigned to the serpent, God’s enemy. So they quote Moses’ famous call for Yahweh to destroy His enemies (Num 10:35). They know that God will redeem, because in His covenant love toward them; God has promised the Seed who would crush the serpent’s head. v26 is as sure in its hope as v8b!

Singing



¹⁷All this has come on us, yet we have not forgotten Thee,
Nor ever in Thy covenant have dealt have dealt unfaithfully.

¹⁸Our heart has not turned back; our steps have not from Thy way strayed,

¹⁹Though crushed by Thee where jackals roam and covered with death's shade.

²⁰If we've forgotten our God's name, to strange gods stretched our hands,

²¹Will God not find this out? For He heart secrets understands.

²²But for Thy sake we're killed all day, as sheep to slaughter brought.

²³Arise, O Lord! Why dost Thou sleep? Awake! Reject us not!

²⁴Why dost Thou hide Thy face? O why forget how we're distressed?

See our oppression, ²⁵for our soul into the dust is pressed;

Our body cleaves unto the earth. ²⁶Arise, our Help above!

O now redeem us for the sake of all Thy steadfast love.

Prayer

- Harvest's worship, evangelism, discipleship, elders, teachers, parents
- Our Presbytery the PCA, the church around the world, particularly mission works and the persecuted church
- Our country, particularly those in high position
- Celestin—family, ministry to Muslims, efforts to help Congolese Presbyterians with farming
- MTW, SAT-7, MERF, ITEM, Gideons, Gospel for Asia, other world missions
- De Groot—grieving the death of their great-grandson
- The Dahn family, Yu Jueng's semester in Cincinnati
- Heather Hakim – Jonathan Isaac and Beatrice Christi due middle of November
- Perry Krosschell—headaches, shoulder after bull attack
- Kristen Dorr, baby Tyler Robert, and family—complete recovery, healthy development, family adjustment
- Phyllis Vanden Brink – getting medical care at Happy Siesta in Remsen
- Sandi's uncle Frank – head-on collision; receiving medical care in Minneapolis
- Maggie's sister Melanie – frequent migraines, wisdom for future decisions and how to prepare for them now with her life
- Maggie's friend Kasie and baby Caleb
- Heather's mother Martha – has had a series of strokes, which will likely continue with increasing impact
- The Rowenhorst Family—Randy's headaches
- Carla Van Essendelft's pregnancy, due November
- Jacob De Groot – air national guard school in Pensacola
- Jonathan Vander Plaats – stationed in Norfolk
- Lisa Vander Plaats – semester in Nicaragua
- Melissa Vander Plaats – in the Netherlands
- Ron De Groot-looking for work, physical and spiritual progress, Christian friends

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Praise Him, all creatures here below!

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host!

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Study Questions for next week, Psalm 45:1-9

¹To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah; a love song.

My heart overflows with a pleasing theme;

I address my verses to the king;

my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.

²You are the most handsome of the sons of men;

grace is poured upon your lips;

therefore God has blessed you forever.

³Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,

in your splendor and majesty!

⁴In your majesty ride out victoriously

for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness;

let your right hand teach you awesome deeds!

⁵Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies;

the peoples fall under you.

⁶Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.

The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness;

⁷you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you

with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;

⁸your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.

From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad;

⁹daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor;

at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

About whom are these verses written (cf. Heb 1:8-9)?

Although they are true to some extent of David and perhaps Solomon, what parts of this can *only* be true about *one* King?

From where should such words about the King come (1b)?

How does this happen (cf. Mat 12:34-35, Mat 15:18-19, Luk 6:43-46, James 3:6-18 BUT Rom 10:9-13)?

Who controls the pen of a scribe?

So what is v1c saying about our tongues?

What kinds of things do we say about Jesus when God controls our tongues (2a)?

Was v2a true of Jesus in His humiliated state (cf. Is 53:2)? About what part of Jesus' human existence must this be speaking, then?

From where do we receive the "grace" of Jesus' "lips" (cf. Rom 10:14-17; Heb 1:1-4:14)?

Whom is God especially honoring at those times (2c)?

What three characteristics does Jesus perfectly combine in His glory and majesty (4b)?

How, besides King, does this psalm address Jesus (6a)?

How long will His kingdom last (6b)?

How do all of His subjects feel about God setting Christ over them as King (7c)?

How do all other princes, kings, princesses, and queens relate to this kingdom (7c-9)?

Who is the queen of v9b (cf. Rev 22:1-21)?