

The Kingdom Hope in Psalms

Psalm 1

The Way of the Righteous and the End of the Ungodly

By Roger Samsel

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The first Psalm teaches us the essential character of the righteous.

*1 Blessed is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
3 He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper.*

A righteous man is not one who toys with ungodliness or walks with a double mind. He is steadfast and faithful, walking in the fear of God day and night. Such a man will be blessed in all that he does.

*4 The ungodly are not so,
But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the ungodly **shall not stand in the judgment,**
Nor sinners **in the congregation of the righteous.***

In verses 4 and 5, the ungodly are set in sharp contrast to the righteous and the eschatological hope of the righteous is contrasted with the end of the ungodly. "The Judgment" spoken of here takes place at the second coming of Christ. The "congregation" or "assembly" or "gathering" of the righteous is also an eschatological event. It will be the first time that all of the redeemed of all the ages will be gathered together in one place. Both of these events (the judgment of the wicked and the congregation of the righteous) are mentioned together in Isaiah 66. The following quotation is from a translation of the Septuagint version of Isaiah 66.

5 Hear the words of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; speak ye, our brethren, to them that hate you and abominate you, that the name of

the Lord may be glorified, and may appear their joy; but they shall be ashamed.

6 A voice of a cry from the city, a voice from the temple, **a voice of the Lord rendering recompense to his adversaries.**

7 Before she that travailed brought forth, before the travail-pain came on, she escaped it and brought forth a male.

8 Who has heard such a thing? and who has seen after this manner? Has the earth travailed in one day? or has even a nation been born at once, that Zion has travailed, and brought forth her children?

9 But I have raised this expectation, yet thou hast not remembered me, saith the Lord: behold, have not I made the bearing and barren woman? saith thy God.

10 Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and all ye that love her **hold in her a general assembly**: rejoice greatly with her, all that now mourn over her:

11 that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breast of her consolation; that ye may milk out, and delight yourselves with the influx of her glory.

12 For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I turn toward them as a river of peace, and as a torrent bringing upon them in a flood the glory of the Gentiles: their children shall be borne upon the shoulders, and comforted on the knees.

13 As if his mother should comfort one, so will I also comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 And ye shall see, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall thrive like grass: and the hand of the Lord shall be known to them that fear him, and he shall threaten the disobedient.

15 ¶ For, behold, the Lord will come as fire, and his chariots as a storm, to render his vengeance with wrath, and his rebuke with a flame of fire.

16 For with the fire of the Lord all the earth shall be judged, and all flesh with his sword: many shall be slain by the Lord.

17 They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves in the gardens, and eat swine's flesh in the porches, and the abominations, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.

18 And I know their works and their imagination. I am going to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

19 And I will leave a sign upon them, and I will send forth them that have escaped of them to the nations, to Tharsis, and Phud, and Lud, and Mosoch, and to Thobel, and to Greece, and to the isles afar off, to those who have not heard my name, nor seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

20 And they shall bring your brethren out of all nations for a gift to the Lord with horses, and chariots, in litters drawn by mules with awnings, to the holy city Jerusalem, said the Lord, as though the children of Israel should bring their sacrifices to me with psalms into the house of the Lord.

21 And I will take of them priests and Levites, saith the Lord.

22 For as the new heaven and the new earth, which I make, remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name continue.

23 **And it shall come to pass from month to month, and from sabbath to sabbath, that all flesh shall come to worship before me in Jerusalem, saith the Lord.**

24 And they shall go forth, and see the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched; and they shall be a spectacle to all flesh.

The "general assembly" (πανηγυρει) mentioned in verse 10 is referred to by Paul in Hebrews 12:23.

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 **to the general assembly** and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

This assembly is also mentioned in Ezekiel 37 in conjunction with the resurrection of the righteous. Verses 1-10 describe the resurrection in explicit detail. Verse ten reads,

So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

The word in the Septuagint for "army" is "congregation" (synagogue). This is the "general assembly" of the righteous. What is this "general assembly"? It is the gathering of the saints in Jerusalem at the second coming of Christ when we shall celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb. According to Psalm 1, the wicked will not stand in this assembly. They are excluded.