

February 8 Su Reading B39 — Psalm 115 — Lifeless Idols

Audio: [Psalm 115 \(ESV\)](#)

**Trusting the Unseen** — Since the Gentiles trusted in their gods represented by the images they could see, they asked about the people of Israel, “*Where is their God?*” (v. 2). This falls into the present-day mindset that says, “I’ll believe it when I see it.” The problem with the Gentiles was that, although they could see their gods, their gods could not see. They were lifeless, and those who made and trusted in their visible gods “*become like them*” (v. 8), lifeless and senseless. On the other hand, the godly Israelites trusted in the unseen God, Yahweh. Three times in vv. 9-11 they are challenged to “*...trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield.*” The visible evidence of the reality of Yahweh was His help and protection that He demonstrated repeatedly while they were in the Promised Land. Another evidence of God’s blessing was the “*increase*” He gave to them and their children (v. 14). We see those same blessings from God in our own lives today, as Paul later promised: “*God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 4:19). After Jesus’ resurrection, He said to doubting Thomas, “*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*” (John 20:29). We trust in and praise the real but unseen God.

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February 9 M Reading B40 — Psalm 116-117 — God of Deliverance

Audio: [Psalm 116-117](#)

**Giving Testimony** — Psalm 116 relates God’s deliverance from a personal life-threatening experience. The psalmist’s first response was to thank and praise God. He said, “*I love the LORD, because he has heard ... my pleas for mercy ... [when] I called on the name of the LORD: ‘... deliver my soul!’*” (vv. 1, 4); and “*when I was brought low, he saved me ... you have delivered my soul from death*” (vv. 6, 8). Have you ever been seriously ill or suffered an injury that could have taken your life? It would be pretty normal to want to thank and praise God for your recovery. How about healing from less serious circumstances? It is more likely that we would attribute that to “normal” recovery. The truth is that God is equally involved in both. The writer of this psalm said that he was not only delivered from death, but also from the “*tears*” and “*stumbling*” of less serious circumstances (v. 8). We should be constantly thanking God for His many deliverances. The psalmist’s second response was to thank God publicly. He said, “*I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people*” (v. 14); and “*I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving ... I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people*” (vv. 17-18). Other believers benefit when they hear about the good things God has given to you. Before the prayer time in the adult class I teach on Sunday, we ask for people to share their praises. We need to brag about God to others. It will help them to look for and share their own blessings with others.

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February 10 Tu Reading B41 — Psalm 118 — Enduring Steadfast Love

Audio: [Psalm 118 \(ESV\)](#)

**Repeated Scripture** — This psalm sounded so familiar as I read it, that it seemed to have been repeated from an earlier psalm. Actually, several portions are similar to earlier-read psalms, and just two days ago in Ps. 115, we saw the same combination of appealing to “*Israel ... the house of Aaron ... [and] those who fear the LORD*” (Ps. 118:2-4; cf. 115:9-11). The first verse of Ps. 118 was repeated in 1 Chron. 16:34, which we also read recently. This psalm is also familiar because it is often quoted in the NT, like “*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!*” (Ps. 118:26), which was quoted by the crowd following Jesus at His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:9). Jesus also repeated the statement about the rejected cornerstone (Ps. 118:22) as referring to Himself (Matt. 21:42; 23:39). Later, the writer of Hebrews quoted Ps. 118:6-7 about being safe from mankind when God is our helper (cf. Heb. 13:6). It is good for us to encounter these kinds of repeated parts of

Scripture; it helps us to connect things together and to realize how wonderfully our Bible is constructed.

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February 11 W Reading B42 — 1 Kings 1 — Adonijah’s Challenge

Audio: [1 Kings 1 \(ESV\)](#)

**Pride Before a Fall** — David was bedridden by this time, as emphasized by bringing beautiful Abishag to keep him warm (vv. 1-4) and by speaking from his bed (v. 47). Since Adonijah was the eldest of David’s surviving sons, he boldly declared himself to be king. He was very proud (“*Adonijah ... exalted himself*”—v. 5), spoiled by David (v. 6), and scheming, as shown by not inviting Solomon to his crowning party (v. 10). We will see tomorrow that he knew that Solomon was God’s choice. Nathan the prophet also knew because he told Bathsheba to remind David of his promise (v. 13). David chose Solomon because God had chosen him even before his birth (1 Chron. 22:9). Both Bathsheba and Nathan challenged David to act quickly because “*the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne ...*” (v. 20). Adonijah had been crowned as king at En-rogel (v. 9) and Solomon at the spring of Gihon (v. 33), both nearby sources of water for the city of Jerusalem. Perhaps Solomon was remembering the failure of his proud brother, Adonijah, when he wrote later, “*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall*” (Prov. 16:18). That should be a continuing caution for us as well, as James warns us: “*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you*” (James 4:10).

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February 12 Th Reading B43 — 1 Kings 2 — David Dies

Audio: [1 Kings 2 \(ESV\)](#)

**Establishing the Kingdom** — The theme of this chapter is that of firmly establishing the kingdom under Solomon, as mentioned four times (vv. 12, 24, 45, 46). David gave these final charges to Solomon: to “*keep the charge of the LORD*” (v. 3) and to wisely punish deserting Joab and cursing Shimei (vv. 6, 9). Joab was killed at the altar, which was a place of security only for those who had accidentally killed someone (Ex. 21:13). Joab had willfully murdered Israel’s army commanders Abner and Amasa (v. 32). Shimei was given conditional protection if he didn’t leave Jerusalem, but he was punished after going to Gath to bring back his runaway servants (v. 46). Solomon’s older brother, Adonijah, was punished after requesting beautiful Abishag to be his wife (v. 17). His older brother, Absalom, had publicly slept with David’s concubines as an act of rebellion against David’s rule (2 Sam. 16:22), so Solomon likely saw Adonijah’s request as connected to treason. The fourth punishment came to the deserting priest, Abiathar, who was “*expelled ... from being priest to the LORD*” (v. 27). The final statement in the chapter concludes with its purpose: “*So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon*” (v. 46).

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February 13 F Reading B44 — Psalm 37 — David’s Last Psalm

Audio: [Psalm 37 \(ESV\)](#)

**Life Lessons** — It is appropriate for us to read this psalm just after the death of David, who likely wrote it just before he died. He said, “*I have been young, and now am old*” (v. 25). It reads like someone summarizing what they felt were the greatest lessons they learned in life. The first has to do with fear and envy: “*Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers!*” (v. 1). This idea is repeated in verses 7-8. God’s strength protects the righteous against evil people’s power, whose wealth is not eternal. When we are threatened by evildoers, we need to trust God, and when we envy their wealth, we are not content with what we have (Heb. 13:5). David’s next lesson is about what the righteous ought to do: “*Trust in the LORD, and do good ... Delight ... in the LORD ... Commit your way to the LORD; ... Be still before the LORD and wait patiently ... [and] Refrain from anger ...*” (vv. 3-5, 7-8). Let’s stop right now and evaluate how we are doing in keeping these seven commands. Grade yourself 1-10 on each one and total them up. I was disappointed to see that my

total was much lower than I wanted it to be. I would like to finish my life feeling that I was close to performing at 70 points. It is interesting that when Solomon wrote Proverbs 24:19, he basically copied what his father had written at the end of his life: "*Fret not yourself because of evildoers, and be not envious of the wicked*" vs. "*Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers!*" (Ps. 37:1). What David had learned, so did Solomon.

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February 14 Sa Reading B45 — Psalm 71 — A Rock of Refuge

Audio: [Psalm 71 \(ESV\)](#)

**Praise and Proclaim** — The beginning of this psalm calls God a refuge (vv. 1, 3, 7) and then calls for His rescue (vv. 2, 4). Most of the rest of the psalm, however, anticipates God's answer in two kinds of responses: praising God and proclaiming to others. There are many expressions of praise: "*My mouth is filled with your praise*" (v. 8); "*I will praise you yet more and more*" (v. 14); and "*I will also praise you with the harp ... I will sing praises to you with the lyre ... My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you*" (vv. 22-23). Of course, our first response should be directed toward God for His rescue, acknowledging that deliverance did not come from others or from chance, but from God. Praise is our vertical response to God. The other major response in this psalm, however, is horizontal, i.e., our proclamation to others about what God has done: "*My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge ... I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone ... I still proclaim your wondrous deeds ... do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation*" (vv. 15-18). We need to brag more about God, and this should be done not only in the presence of other believers, but "*all the day*" (vv. 15, 24), which includes our contacts with those who need to discover the goodness of God. Praise up and proclaim out!