

March 18, 2017

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Scripture

Psalm 149

- ¹ Praise the Lord!
Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
- ² Let Israel be glad in its Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.
- ³ Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.
- ⁴ For the Lord takes pleasure in his people;
he adorns the humble with victory.
- ⁵ Let the faithful exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their couches.
- ⁶ Let the high praises of God be in their throats
and two-edged swords in their hands,
- ⁷ to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishment on the peoples,
- ⁸ to bind their kings with fetters
and their nobles with chains of iron,
- ⁹ to execute on them the judgment decreed.
This is glory for all his faithful ones.
Praise the Lord!

Devotional

“Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song” (v. 1) commands the Psalm. Praise God for a victory God gave the people. We don’t know what it was. But God “adorns the humble with victory” (v. 4). So sing!

The words “new song” appear in other psalms (33:3; 96:1). They may designate a new composition praising God’s goodness. But Karl Barth suggested that, in the Old Testament, “new song” refers to “the coming and crucial time of the Messiah” (*Church Dogmatics* III/3, 472). If he’s correct, this text is one for Lent.

The “humble” obtained “victory” (in Hebrew, also “salvation”). Jesus the Messiah “humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8). Then God exalted him (2:9). Jesus brought victory and salvation. In Lent, we praise the humble Jesus who saves us from the cross—and who triumphs! God’s people “exult in glory” (v. 5). Sing a new song!

Prayer

O God of goodness and blessing, we praise you that you are always with us. As you protected and helped your ancient people, so through your presence do you do for us now as we know your salvation in Jesus Christ. Thank you for the humble Christ, who triumphs over all! Amen.