

MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

4 October 2020

English Worship Service

"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)

Address: 63 Cranwell Road, Singapore 509851

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Sunday School: 10 am

Sunday English / Chinese Worship Service: 10.45 am

Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.30 pm

**Rev Colin Wong (HP : 9665 8160); Elder Daniel Tau (HP : 9761 5415);
Elder Peter Ong (HP : 9626 7045); Elder Royce Yeo (HP : 9362 3067)**

MORE APPRECIATION OF THE WORD

We continue our meditation on Psalm 119:20-24. The Word of God is very precious to the Psalmist. He treasures and cherishes it at all times. He relies on it 100%. He knows that apart from the Word, he is lost and directionless. That is why he longs for it at all cost.

The following verses further show the Psalmist's appreciation of the eternal Word that is forever settled in heaven (Psalm 119:89).

My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times (20).

The Psalmist had prayed to God to open his eyes to behold wonderful things from his Word (Psalm 119:18) and he had pleaded with him not to hide his Word from him (Psalm 119:19). And here he pleaded with God for his Word. He said that his soul is consumed with longing for his Word at all times, not some time. He had no other desires. His whole stream of desires ran in this channel – that is, to long for God's Word all the time.

Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Nothing satisfies our soul than the Word of God. Like Job who treasured God's Word more than his necessary food, let us also long for the Word above all things. There is no spiritual satisfaction apart from the Word that is sweeter than honeycomb (Psalm 119:103). Therefore, ask God to give us that hunger and thirst for the Word the first thing in the morning.

Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments (21).

God not only rebukes the proud but he also resists them (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5). The proud are a cursed people because they do not keep the Word (Proverbs 13:13; Deuteronomy 27:26). Morison proposes to render this verse thus: "Thou rebukest the proud; cursed are they who err from thy commandments." The

characteristics of the proud are found in the following verses in this Psalm: The proud always mock at others (51), always tell lies (69), always wrong people without a cause (78), always scheme for the downfall of people (85), and always oppress people (122).

Solomon warns us, “Before destruction the heart of man is haughty” (Proverbs 18:12a) and “A man’s pride shall bring him low” (Proverbs 29:23). The proud do not accept the Word. They are above the Word of God.

Pharaoh was a good example. When Moses and Aaron confronted him to let the children of Israel go, he proudly said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go” (Exodus 5:2; 10:3). Another example was King Nebuchadnezzar. He was a proud, arrogant man. He boasted about his kingdom. He said, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” (Daniel 4:30) As a result, God judged him and humiliated him for seven years (Daniel 4:31-33). In his restored state of insanity, he said, “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase” (Daniel 4:34-37).

Yes, those who walk in pride, God is able to humble them (Luke 18:14). Let us learn to walk humbly before God, for in due time he will raise us up (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6).

Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies (22).

Remove from me reproach and contempt (22a).

Here is a prayer of the Psalmist to God to remove from him reproach and contempt of men. The Psalmist may be falsely charged with scorn and contempt. For that reason, he wants to be cleared in his innocence. The word “remove” simply means “roll from off him,” or “let it not come at me” or “let it not stay with me.”

One’s integrity is important. If our integrity is in question, then it will tarnish our image immediately. Solomon said, “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Proverbs 22:1). In Ecclesiastes he said, “A good name is better than precious ointment” (Ecclesiastes 7:1). Indeed, a good name is a precious balsam. Therefore, let us strive to keep our integrity before God and men, and live a holy and a blameless life (Ephesians 1:4).

... for I have kept thy testimonies (22b).

Whether the charge against the Psalmist is true or not, let God be the Judge but as for him, he would continue to keep God’s Word. Unlike the proud who are full of scorn and contempt, do not need God and his Word and are self-sufficient, but the Psalmist has chosen to keep the Word.

Some Christians give up reading the Word when falsely alleged. They got angry with God. They blamed God. So, out of frustration, they stop reading the Word and some even deny the faith. This ought not so to be (James 3:10).

Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes (23).

Despite the opposition from principal men trying to plot against him and speak evil against him, the

Psalmist bore his trial with holy calmness. Nothing could shake him from reading and meditating on God's Word.

Oftentimes, you and I are distracted by life's crises. We begin to look inwardly. We allow circumstances to dictate us. We forget how God works. We forget the benefits of trials of life (James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6, 7). We forget to read God's Word. We forget to pray for wisdom and understanding of the situation.

What then should we do? The best thing to do when we are in crisis is to read and meditate on his Word. The Psalmist said, "My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word.... My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word" (Psalm 119:25, 28). The Word revives and strengthens us in times of crisis.

Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counselors (24).

God's Word is a delight to the Psalmist (also Psalm 119:77, 92, 143, 174). Each time he reads it, joy fills his heart. The Word should be our delight too. Job said, "I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). The Word is not only a delight to the Psalmist but it is also his counsellors. The Word gives him good, sound advice. In times of crisis, the Word is his guide (Psalm 119:105); in times of sorrow, the Word is his delight (Psalm 119:24a). Jeremiah said, "Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jeremiah 15:16).

What is the Word of God to you? Is it precious to you? Remember this precious truth: In trying times, do not forget to read and meditate on the Word. Amen.

Pastor Colin Wong

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Theme for the Quarter :
FREE IN CHRIST (An Exposition on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians)

English Worship Service :
Elder Daniel Tau speaks on We are One Body in Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31)