

TRUTH & RIGHT

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EXALT THE GOD OF HEAVEN

In book 4 of the Psalms (Ps. 90-106), the theme seems to be exalting God and spiritual maturity. These Psalms are filled with admonishments, commands, and exhortations to praise and honor the God of Heaven. For example, the first two verses of book 4 is a Psalm of Moses, and it says, "*Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born or you gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God*" (Ps. 90:1-2). Think about what is being said here. God has been a dwelling place for His people in all generations. David continues by saying God has been a Protector for all who take shelter in Him (Psa. 91:1-2). He is our refuge and our fortress. Psalm 91:3 says God will deliver us from the snare of the trapper and the deadly pestilence. He will also cover us

with His pinions, and under His wings, we may seek refuge (Ps. 91:4a). If that is not enough, "*His faithfulness is a shield and a bulwark*" (Ps. 91:4b). From the beginning of time to the gospel age, God has been a faithful shelter for His faithful servants. Consider the words of the apostle Paul in his 2nd letter to Timothy: "*In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing*" (2 Tim. 4:8). God is the righteous Judge, and He will reward His faithful servants with the crown of righteousness. Referencing back to the Psalms, we read in Psalm 97:1, "*The LORD reigns.*" This simple and yet pungent statement ought to make us fall on our knees and rejoice. It also needs to make us tremble if we are living in

rebellion to God and His ways. God reigns! He is in control. He is the One that has subjected all things under the feet of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and His beloved Son (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Eph. 1:20-23). God is the One who planned our salvation in Christ from before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:18-20). We could go on and on for (I suppose) an eternity naming all the wonderful things God has done. We need to seek to exalt the God of Heaven and all His wonderful attributes. We need to exalt the Son of God (Jn. 5; Phil. 2:9). We need to exalt and teach God's wonderful plan of salvation as it is revealed and written. Since God is the One who has brought salvation and has given us the glorious opportunity to serve Him, we need to exalt His name and not man's name. How often do we hear a good sermon and exalt the preacher who brought the glad tidings of God instead of exalting the One with whom the message originated? I want to be extremely clear here. I am *not* saying it is wrong to encourage and build up a gospel preacher for his labors and good work. I am saying it is wrong to exalt a man and his name to the point of forgetting where the message came from (God and Christ). It is wrong to flatter him and pat him on the back

and not take seriously what was spoken from God's Word. How often do we get into petty "my preacher is better than your preacher" wars with one another? Let's remember preaching originates with God, as does the word of the cross (1 Cor. 1:18-32). Clearly, the work of preaching is extremely vital work. If there were no preachers, the word of the cross would not be spread. If there were no preachers in the church, it'd be difficult for the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places to learn the manifold wisdom of God according to His eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10-11). Let's just always keep in mind from where the message came. Let's always remember to give our Heavenly Father the glory! Consider the great apostle, Paul. This man was inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. This man was an apostle by the very will of God (Gal.1:1). Paul wrote nearly half of the entire New Testament (13 books) and was one of the hardest laborers we read of in Scripture. Yet, notice how Paul considers himself in Philippians 1:1. "*Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Jesus Christ.*" Paul considered himself a slave or a lowly servant of Christ. Also, consider what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:10, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am.*" Paul understands his

place. By God's grace, he is what he is. Paul leaned on God. Paul gave God the glory. In other words, Paul is saying if it weren't for God's grace, he wouldn't be what he is. It was in God's glorious mind to reveal to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ through the apostle Paul. Think about the forethought and excellence of His mind! We can honestly say with David, "*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain it*" (Ps. 139:6). Think about this from a logical perspective for a moment. God is the One who reigns. God is the Creator. Psalm 97:3-5 says, "*Fire goes before Him and burns up His adversaries round about. His lightnings light up the world; the earth saw and trembled. The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.*" Why would we choose to exalt self or another man over a Being as tremendous and magnificent as God? Why would we want to exalt self or man over One who sent His only begotten Son to put on flesh and die a shameful death for our sins (Phil. 2:5-8; Jn. 1:14)? Why would an elder of the Lord's church lord it over the flock if he is only there because of God's design for the church? If God had not been gracious enough to reveal His

plan for His holy church, we would not have been aware of the need for elders, deacons, teachers, preachers, etc. Why would a member of the Lord's body gripe and complain against God and His children (Phil. 2:14)? It is through God and Christ by which we have been sanctified and made kings and priests (1 Cor. 1:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:4-12). It is through God and Christ that we have life, breath, and all the things that we need! It is through Christ that we have become partakers of the heavenly promises (2 Pet. 1:1-4)! Beloved brethren and friends let us always remember to exalt the God of Heaven. Let us never forget where our blessings and salvation come from (Lk. 19:10). Let us never forget why we worship (Jn. 4:24), why we put sin to death (Rom. 6:3-6), and what our goal is (Col. 3:2). Let us honor God all the days of our lives (Rom. 12:1-2)! — Jordan Lawson

"Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16). — Jordan Lawson

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. The memory of the righteous is blessed, but the name of the wicked will ____.

- a) Fade
- b) Rot
- c) Slip
- d) Fall

2. The wise of heart will receive ____, but a babbling fool will be ruined.

- a) Money
- b) Praise
- c) Treasure
- d) Commands

3. Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all ____.

- a) Transgressions
- b) Blessings
- c) Situations
- d) Families

4. He who conceals hatred has lying ____, and he who spreads slander is a fool.

- a) Spirit
- b) Faith
- c) Righteousness
- d) Lips

5. When pride comes, then comes ____, but with the humble is wisdom.

- a) Dishonor
- b) Spirit
- c) Truth
- d) Faith

6. He who despises his neighbor lacks sense, but a man of ____ keeps silent.

- a) Integrity
- b) Strength
- c) Ability
- d) Understanding

7. He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is ____ conceals a matter.

- a) Truth
- b) Righteousness
- c) Trustworthy
- d) Spirit

8. He who withholds grain, the people will curse him, but blessing will be on the head of him who ____ it.

- a) Steals
- b) Sells
- c) Eats
- d) Hides

9. Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is ____.

- a) Sneaky
- b) Exceptional
- c) Stupid
- d) Savy

10. There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings ____.

- a) Watchfulness
- b) Protection
- c) Cheerfulness
- d) Healing

- 1) B, Reference: Prov. 6:7
 2) D, Reference: Prov. 10:8
 3) A, Reference: Prov. 10:12
 4) D, Reference: Prov. 10:18
 5) A, Reference: Prov. 11:2
 6) D, Reference: Prov. 11:12
 7) C, Prov. 11:13
 8) B, Prov. 11:26
 9) C, Prov. 12:1
 10) D, Prov. 12:18