

David's Tabernacle

By R.T. Nusbaum

1 Chronicles 16:7-13

"Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people" (1 Chronicles 16:8).

This is a psalm that King David wrote. The occasion was the Ark of the Covenant had just been moved into a special tent David had prepared for it in Jerusalem. He had previously attempted to move the Ark, but met with failure because he did not move it in the correct way. Moving or being motivated the correct way is important.

Having met with success this time, David was deeply moved to write this psalm of thanksgiving. The psalm challenges the people: (1) to worship the Lord by thanking Him for blessings bestowed. But what blessings is he referring to? The blessing was the Tabernacle of David and all its benefits. This was the occasion of the Psalm and the fountain from which the words sprang. In other words, David was not just referring to personal blessings.

Then what specifically was the blessing? It was the fact that the very presence of God was not far away, at Shiloh. It included the fact that David no longer had to go through the long and arduous rituals of Moses' Tabernacle, which still didn't lead into the Holy of Holies for the average person. David had direct access with no thought of His personal failures for there was no reminders of his sin, much less of himself. There was only the glorious presence of the Lord.

Notice in this Psalm David uses the phrase "call upon his name". To "call upon his name" in the Tabernacle of Moses involved sacrifice, death, and ritual. In David's Tabernacle it meant direct access. He didn't just call upon the name of a God he could not see. When David called upon God's name, he looked Him straight in the face and poured out his heart to Him. There is a huge difference between what it means to call upon God's name in Moses' Tabernacle and to call upon God's name in David's Tabernacle.

David also used the phrase "make known his deeds among the people" in this Psalm. To "make known his deeds among the people" is more than talking about what God did along time ago at the Red Sea or something place. This song was written specifically in reaction to having set up the Tabernacle in David's back yard. The most recent deeds that God had done among them was that He tabernacled among them. It represented the coming of Immanuel – God with us. Sure, God was with them in Moses Tabernacle but behind veils and walls. The scripture says in the New Testament that Jesus comes and dwells among us. This is referring to His Life within us. The blessing of that is that we "make known His deeds" instead of producing works that make us acceptable to God. It is not our works but Christ in us doeth the works. This is not just declaring those works but letting Him operate through us so that we make them known in the earth.

"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles," (Psalm 43:3).

David saw God's light and truth, not as something in themselves but as similar to the star that lead to Jesus' birth. It was meant to bring him to Zion. It brought him to God's desired dwelling place. God was happier in David's Tabernacle than Moses. He desired it for a habitation. It is a place where there is no veil and we can come boldly. Jesus said that the Spirit would guide us into all truth (John 16:13). He made it clear that the truth seen would be Jesus himself.

All the light and revelation that God gives us is meant to accomplish one thing: to bring us into the reality of Zion. Zion is another name for David's Tabernacle. God wants to bring us to a place of union and oneness where we are not struggling through the rituals of Moses' Tabernacle to get to God but dwell in His presence. David's Tabernacle has no reference to our sins and failures but only to God's glory. Our hearts are occupied with Jesus because our hearts are indwelt by Jesus. In other words, we are not self occupied but He has come to live in us and we are now a habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). We are not self occupied. Self has been kicked out and we are now occupied by the Life of Christ. ***