

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

L: God's Warning To Repent Of An Artificial Religiosity

(Psalm 50:1-23)

I. Introduction

- A. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their false religiosity (Matthew 23:1-36), but this sin has long existed.
- B. Psalm 50:1-23 addresses this sin in Asaph's day in the dispensation of the Law, so we view it for our insight:

II. God's Warning To Repent Of An Artificial Religiosity, Psalm 50:1-23.

- A. The introductory remarks in the English Bible are part of verse one in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1017), so we stay with the verse numbering arrangement of the English Bible.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 50:1-23 as follows:
 - 1. "El, Elohim Jahweh speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to where it sets," Psalm 50:1.
 - 2. "From Zion, perfect in beauty, Elohim shines forth," Psalm 50:2.
 - 3. "Our Elohim comes and He will not be silent; a fire devours before Him, and around Him a tempest rages," Psalm 50:3.
 - 4. "He summons the heavens above and the earth, that He may judge His people," Psalm 50:4.
 - 5. "Gather to Me My godly ones, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice," Psalm 50:5.
 - 6. "And the heavens proclaim His righteousness, because Elohim Himself is Judge. Selah," Psalm 50:6.
 - 7. "Hearken, O My people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you! I Myself am Elohim -- your Elohim!" (Psalm 50:7)
 - 8. "I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices or for your burnt offerings, which are ever before Me:" (v. 8)
 - 9. "I have no need of a bull from your stalls or of goats from your pens," Psalm 50:9.
 - 10. "Because Mine (emph. pro.) is every animal of the forest, and the cattle on a thousand hills," Psalm 50:10.
 - 11. "I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the fields are Mine," Psalm 50:11.
 - 12. "If I were hungry I would not tell you, for Mine is the world and all that is in it," Psalm 50:12.
 - 13. "Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?" (Psalm 50:13)
 - 14. "Sacrifice to Elohim a thank offering; and fulfill your vows to the Most High," Psalm 50:14.
 - 15. "And call upon Me in the day of tight distress; I will rescue you out of the narrow straits of distress and then you will honor Me!" (Psalm 50:15)
 - 16. "But to the wicked Elohim says, 'What right do you have to recite My decrees or to take my covenant on your lips?' (Psalm 50:16)
 - 17. "For you (emph. pron.) hate My instruction and cast My words behind you," Psalm 50:17.
 - 18. "If you see a thief you join with him; your lot is with adulterers," Psalm 50:18.
 - 19. "Your mouth you use for evil and harness your tongue for deceit," Psalm 50:19.
 - 20. "You speak continually against your brother, and slander your own mother's son," Psalm 50:20.
 - 21. "These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was just like yourself, but I will reprove you, and array your sins in order before your eyes!" (Psalm 50:21)
 - 22. "Consider this (emphatic), you who forget Elohim, lest I tear you to pieces [like a violent, attacking animal of prey] and there be none to snatch you away [from Me]," Psalm 50:22.
 - 23. "He who sacrifices thank offerings honors Me, and as for the man who orders his way aright I will cause him to see the salvation of Elohim," Psalm 50:23.
- C. We note significant observations and applications of this psalm that edify believers today (as follows):
 - 1. The psalm voices God's displeasure at hypocritical worship, the worship of God at His tabernacle that is performed by those who sin in violation of God's law (v. 8-15, 16-20), or artificial religiosity.
 - 2. God's displeasure of artificial religiosity is intense, seen in His warning of physical violence against wrongdoers in judgment (v. 22), but His reward for heartfelt obedience to Him is equally great (v. 23).
 - 3. Note how God uses troubling trials to disciple the upright in delivering them out of narrow straits of distress (v. 15a), and how it leads to their honoring the Lord from the heart (v. 15b)! (See Rev. 3:17-19)

Lesson: God warned the artificially religious to repent of their hypocrisy or face His severe discipline, while also promising to disciple the upright through difficult trials and to bless them greatly in the end.

Application: May we repent as needed of artificial religiosity and cleave to the Lord in true devotion for blessing.