

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Fifteen - Handling Belittlements By Those Who Mock One's Faith In The Bible's God (Psalm 115:1-18)

I. Introduction

- A. The Christian is to believe that Christ whom they have never seen died and rose again for his sin to have eternal life. Then, to function in life, Scripture calls on him to trust in that **unseen** God for this life's needs.
- B. Such **faith** seems *ridiculous* to some who do not know Christ, for they view the Christian as a fool who trusts so much in an Entity he has never seen nor heard, an Entity they believe therefore cannot exist!
- C. What may be especially hard for the believer is to face **belittlement** by such critiques for this **faith**.
- D. Psalm 115:1-18 answers this challenge, teaching the faithful how to handle such belittlement for his faith:

II. Handling Belittlements By Those Who Mock One's Faith In The Bible's God, Psalm 115:1-18.

- A. The psalmist calls for **God, not men**, to receive adulation for His loyal love and faithfulness, Ps. 115:1.
- B. The **reason** he *emphasizes* a focus on **GOD** as *opposed* to **men** is revealed in verses 2-18 as follows:
 1. The Gentile nations, whose focus of glory is not on God, but on themselves question the existence of Israel's God, for, unlike **their** theologies, Israel's God is an unseen Entity accepted on **faith**, 115:2.
 - a. Romans 1:21-23 tells us that unsaved men have resisted adhering to belief in the Biblical God, and have instead *replaced* that true belief with their own false machinations of deity.
 - b. Indeed, the Gentiles of Israel's day set up tangible idols in their temples that they sought to manipulate by stroking or rubbing in sensitive parts of the idols' "bodies", and thereby gain blessing.
 - c. Opposite this, Israel's holiest of holies contained a box overseen by two cherubs, and the "Unseen" God hovered over that box as sovereign, unable to be manipulated by man and meet **man's** interests!
 2. Opposite this Gentile criticism of Israel's faith in the Unseen God, the psalmist reveals that the Biblical God resides in heavens, sovereign over all men on earth unlike the Gentile gods, Ps. 115:3.
 3. In fact, the psalmist goes on to reveal the logical **absurdity** of the Gentile "gods" that have been set up by the imaginations of mortal men to replace view of the One, True, Unseen God of heaven: (v. 4-7)
 - a. The Gentile gods are hand-made statues of gold and silver, Ps. 115:4.
 - b. Such man-made gods have mouths but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see, ears but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell and feet but they cannot walk, Ps. 115:5-7a.
 - c. The psalmist turns the tables on his critics, revealing that their gods cannot even utter a little grunt in the throat, an ironic and somewhat humorous polemic of the idols, Ps. 115:7b!
 4. Consequently, those who **rely** on such man-made gods will themselves become just like them, dead, lifeless men in the grave with no hope of the resurrection of the righteous, Ps. 115:8!
 5. Having demolished the validity of his critics, the psalmist calls upon the faithful to rely on God for help, protection and blessing, whether we are great or small in the eyes of men, Ps. 115:9-13.
 6. He offers a divine blessing of increases in prosperity for faithfulness to God, 115:14-15.
 7. To reiterate the nature of the true, Unseen God, the psalmist recalls that the Biblical God resides in the Heavens far above man where He has assigned man the lowly earth as God's subject, Ps. 115:16. In this way, **we as men have no right to create a foolish idol for worship that we can manipulate in insurrection against submission to our lofty, Unseen God!**
 8. Then, in **contrast** to the unsaved who are headed to eternal death with their hapless beliefs in idols, the **believer** will extol God now and **evermore** in hope of the resurrection from the dead, Ps. 115:18a,b.
 9. Thus, in having handled the critics of his faith, the psalmist again calls for praise to Jahweh, Ps. 115:18c.

Lesson: To handle criticism for faith in the Unseen, Biblical God, the **BELIEVER** can examine the **FALSE** god or **IDEA** of God found in his **CRITIC'S** theology to see the utter **FUTILITY** of **THAT** view. Then, weighing his belief against his critic's view, he can see the validity of his own view!

Application: We should not be sidetracked into being intimidated by criticism for faith in the Biblical God, for **CRITICS** of faith in our God in **PRIDE** have **REPLACED** the true God with sad, futile substitutes! All we must do to be edified is find the **HOLES** in **THEIR** own views to see how **CREDIBLE** is our faith! Then we can confidently praise the Lord of Scripture!