

Psalm 76

Title: God is Great and Glorious

Author and Date: Asaph

Key Verses: Psalm 76:1, 4, 12

Type: Praise

Outline

- A. God's great name (verses 1-3).
- B. God's excellent judgment (verses 4-9).
- C. God's terrible fear (verses 10-12).

Notes

Title: "For the Chief Musician; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph, a Song." For "Chief Musician", see the notes on the title of Psalm 4. For "stringed instruments", see the title of Psalm 4, 6, 54, 55, and 67. For "Asaph", see the notes on the title of Psalm 50 and Psalm 73. Because the LXX reads, "a Song regarding the Assyrian", some Bible students believe this psalm is describing the military victory over the Assyrian army in Hezekiah's day (701 B.C.). Thus, this psalm would praise God for his giving the victory over Israel's enemies, the Assyrian army (2 K. 18-19; Isa. 36-37).

Summary: Psalm 76 is a psalm of praise (verse 10). God is great (verse 1). He dwells in Jerusalem (verse 2) and it is there that he defends it and defeats the army of Israel's enemies in battle (verse 3).

God is glorious and excellent (verse 4). He demonstrates his victorious power over the soldiers (verse 5) and he rebukes their war-horses (verse 6). As a result, he is feared by men and earth (verses 7-8). He judges and saves the meek of the earth (verse 9).

The psalmist closes with some reminders about God. First, the wrath of man actually gives occasion to praise God (verse 10). Second, the faithful to God are to pay their vows and bring their presents to him (verse 11). Third, God cuts off princes and is terrible (dreadful) to kings (verse 12).

Verse 2: "Salem" (from the Heb. *shalom*, peace; see Gen. 14:18) and "Zion" are other names for Jerusalem.

Verse 3: For "Selah", see the notes on Psalm 3.

Verse 4: God is more glorious and excellent than the “mountains of prey” (KJV). Mountains with prey are beautiful, but God is more so.

Verse 5: The “men of might did not find their hands” means the men no longer had their strength.

Verse 8: God’s “judgment” (KJV) or “sentence” (ASV) is heard from heaven.

Verse 9: For “Selah”, see the notes on Psalm 3.

Verse 10: How does the wrath of man praise God? When men get angry against God and God defeats them, it is an occasion to praise God. What men meant for disgrace and shame, God means for praise. A good example of this is Pharaoh (Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17).

Verse 12: “Terrible” (KJV) means dreadful or inspiring awe (Psa. 47:2; 89:7; etc.).

Questions

1. What is said about God in Judah and in Israel (verse 1)?
2. What is in Salem and in Zion (verse 2)?
3. What does God do in Salem and Zion (verse 3)?
4. How is God described (verse 4)?
5. What happens to the “stout-hearted” (KJV) and “men of might” (KJV) (verse 5)?
6. What happens at God’s rebuke (verse 6)?
7. Who is to be feared and what question does the psalmist ask (verse 7)?

8. What is heard from heaven and what is the result (verse 8)?

9. Who does God save (verse 9)?

10. What praises God (verse 10)?

11. What does the psalmist urge his readers to do (verse 11)?

12. What does God do with princes (verse 12)?

Applications for Today

1. God is glorious and excellent (verse 4). What about God is glorious (Ex. 15:11; Deut. 28:58)? What about God is excellent (Psa. 8:1, 9; 150:2; Isa. 12:5; 28:29)?

2. God should be feared by men (verse 7). What kind of rulers are needed (Ex. 18:21)? What question did Satan ask and what answer did God give (Job 1:9; 2:3)? What is the whole of man (Eccl. 12:13)? How are Abraham (Gen. 22:12) and Cornelius described (Acts 10:2, 22)?

3. God gets angry (verse 7). What provokes God's anger and wrath (1 K. 11:9; 1 Chron. 13:10; 2 Chron. 36:16; Ezra 10:14; Eccl. 5:4-6; Jer. 7:18; Jn. 3:36; Rom. 1:18; 2:5)?

4. God saves the meek of the earth (verse 9). Who was the meekest man in all the earth (Num. 12:3)? What does the Messiah do for the meek of the earth (Isa. 11:4)? What are the meek of the earth told to do and why (Zeph. 2:3)? What do the meek inherit (Mt. 5:5)?

5. God is worthy of our gifts (verse 11). What do Christians give (2 Cor. 9:6-7)?