

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
A BEAUTIFUL STATE OF MIND



PSALM 99 1-9 NLT // 2 PETER 1:12-13, 16-21 NLT

MONDAY 2/20/2023

Psalm 99:1-9 // (1) The Lord is king! Let the nations tremble! He sits on his throne between the cherubim. Let the whole earth quake!

2 Peter 1:12-13;16-21 // (12-13) Therefore, I will always remind you about these things—even though you already know them and are standing firm in the truth you have been taught. 13 And it is only right that I should keep on reminding you as long as I live.

REFLECTION

Peter is writing about his encounter with God's voice on the mountain top with Jesus. It was a very a beautiful state of mind experience: one he would never forget. Peter is reflecting on the glorious moment when James and John followed Jesus up to a near by mountain. There, on the mount they were exposed to the majestic power of the Spirit. Jesus' appearance radiated His glory. It was for Peter an "out of body experience" of which was seared upon his consciousness. This exalting and glorifying event was by far the most powerful spiritual event Peter, James and John had yet experienced. In the midst of this vision of Jesus' transfiguration, they heard God speak, "this is my loved Son". (Please read: Matthew 17:1-9) Peter is telling us this because he has learned he is about die soon. Up until this point, I am sure Peter was expecting Jesus to returned to earth, so he feels it is urgent to remind his followers he heard God's voice tell him the truth about Jesus Christ is God's eternal Son. Peter knew the human nature and that his people might the give up a walk away from Jesus after he died. Peter's words have a manner of great force and power prayer every thing is true and continue to wait for Jesus retrun. Peter, James and John the Sons of Zebadi not longer were confused about Jesus. They were the first true witness of sharing their lives with God's Son and willing to share the greatest experience of his life. When they saw Jesus glory and heard God's majestic voice, life would never be the same. Nor could they ever forget it. Do you remember when you're first believed in Jesus?

PRAYER Lord Jesus you are my king! Let all the people tremble and humble themselves before you. I pray Lord help me to be more reverant towards you? In Jesus Name Amen.

TUESDAY 2/21/2023

Psalm 99:1-9 // (2-3) The Lord sits in majesty in Jerusalem,

exalted above all the nations. 3 Let them praise your great and awesome name. Your name is holy!

2 Peter 1:12-13;16-21 // (16-17) For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes 17 when he received honor and glory from God the Father.

REFLECTION

Every one likes a good story. Especially a good story about meeting Jesus for the first time. All of us who serve Christ, need to take seriously our encounter with Jesus Christ. We become lawful servants of Christ who we have turned our lives over too. He now governs our lives with His grace and truth. Peter tells us that a voice out of the cloud spoke and declared, "This is my Son." They were struck down in fear. They fell down on their faces and trembled. When we encounter the true fear of God, tremble is assured. I have noticed over the last several years people have lost reverence and respect for the Godhead. When I was young we dare not speak when we enter the sanctuary. This was God's holy place. Today sit in the pew people look at their phones, sip coffee, chatting softly. Really? As Peter witness this powerful miracle of the glory of Christ shining brightly all around them they entered into " a beautiful spiritual state" These three men were about to be prepared for Jesus' resurrection day: when the impossible became possible. Jesus is grooming Peter to see right before his eyes the

TUESDAY 2/21/2023 CONTINUED

In that moment these three were “born from above” and believed. Jesus speaks about this in John 20: 27-29 27 "Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe! My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.””

PRAYER Lord Jesus you are to be exalted in all the nations. I praise your great and awesome Name and thank you for opening my mind and heart to believe in you. Praise for the many blessing on my life. In Jesus Name Amen.



WEDNESDAY 2/22/2023

Psalms 99:1-9 // (4-5) Mighty King, lover of justice, you have established fairness. You have acted with justice and righteousness throughout Israel. 5 Exalt the Lord our God! Bow low before his feet, for he is holy!

2 Peter 1:12-13;16-21 // (17) The voice from the majestic glory of God said to him, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.

REFLECTION

In his “beautiful state of mind ” Peter finds himself in a place of total holiness full and truth. He along with, John and James were surrounded by God’s heavenly glory. He saw the glorious vision of Jesus divine nature and it was overwhelming. They fell down in reverence and amazement. It wouldn't have been wonderful if Peter could have stayed right there and never return to flesh and blood reality of life. No. It was given to him to share with us the truth of God’s Son. It is the same with us, to share the good news of our salvation for death to life. Nothing on earth is more powerful than this truth. This celestial appearance of Jesus was a introduction to the future of Peter’s life. Hearing God’s voice gave Peter, James and John authority. But it was not until Jesus' resurrection did these men share this experience with others. Thank God they have shared it with us.

PRAYER All mighty, all holy, Lord Jesus you have enacted justice and established fairness. Your love for is overwhelming. Help me to exalt your name as I live today. In Jesus Name Amen.

THURSDAY 2/23/2023

Psalms 99:1-9 // (6-7) Moses and Aaron were among his priests; Samuel also called on his name. They cried to the Lord for help, and he answered them. 7 He spoke to Israel from the pillar of cloud, and they followed the laws and decrees he gave them.

2 Peter 1:12-13;16-21 // (18-19) We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain. 19 Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets.

REFLECTION

The holy mount experience showed that the Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain of all holiness. He makes all us holy by His presence in our hearts. When we enter the sanctuary on Sunday morning we are entering holy ground. Each week we take time to revere God. Think about it this way: As Jesus was preparing Peter, James and John for His resurrection, Jesus is preparing us each Sunday to meet Him face to face upon our death. It is wise for us to prepare ourselves for the day to honor God.

PRAYER I cry out to you Lord Jesus asking for you to heal my body and spirit. Lift me up out from my fear and give me peace just like when you spoke to Peter from the cloud. In Jesus Name Amen.

FRIDAY 2/24/2023

Psalm 99:1-9 //(8) O Lord our God, you answered them. You were a forgiving God to them, but you punished them when they went wrong.

2 Peter 1:12-13;16-21 // (19) You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place—until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts.

REFLECTION

Peter reminds us that as long as we live in this world, we need the proclamation of God's holy prophets as our guiding light. If we do not take notice of them, we do nothing but wander aimlessly in darkness with no future. Apart from the prophets' warnings, the gospel is the essential teaching of Jesus Christ who guides us in truth and opens the gate to our future life. John 10:6-10, "Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant, so he explained it to them: "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me[a] were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them." All of our life ought to be guided by God's word. That is why I write these devotions. A "teaspoon of theology every day, keeps the darkness at bay." We are all overwhelmed by pithy slogans on how to have a good life. Let us not be ignorant about all the doors of darkness we can easily enter. By letting the light of the Lord shine upon us each day, we begin to be illuminated by God's love and that is when we find true comfort and peace. Our Lord Jesus brings a remedy for all evil by holding a torch to guide us in the midst of darkness.

PRAYER Praise your Lord Jesus, O Lord, thank you for answering my prayers. You are a forgiving God full of mercy and love. I pray You to continue to guide my life. Please forgive me, for I have entered the doors that lead to darkness. Forgive me, Lord, for I have caused others to sin. In Jesus Name Amen.

SATURDAY 2/25/2023

Psalm 99:1-9 // (9) Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain in Jerusalem, for the Lord our God is holy!

2 Peter 1:12-13;16-21 // (20-21) Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, 21 or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.

REFLECTION

Notice how prophecy is a message only from God. It is a forecast of a future event, a future life. The Bible is so very clear, and there is only one more prophecy left: that is the return of Jesus Christ to reclaim all of God creation. Peter is teaching us how to prepare our hearts and minds to receive this spiritual knowledge of Jesus' return. We all need to be reminded of that "beautiful spiritual state" when we first believed. There is nothing more loving and comforting to the whole world. When we renounce in our minds feelings of the flesh in the presence of God, we are acknowledging our submission to God. We submit and accept God's authority over our lives. God blesses our submission with the anointing of His Spirit. The mysteries of faith in Christ are found all over scripture. Yet, there are those who approach the Bible with total lack of reverence. The result is the Word has no meaning, nor can it be embraced nor understood. When people have contempt for God, they show their arrogance. Without the Holy Spirit enlightening us we are deemed insufficient to understand God's Word. God's mysteries contain things hidden to our flesh, for they are exalted treasures of life far surpassing our human capacities. Peter's mountain experience surpasses the human capacity to accept it. Peter confirms the God spoke to him. When we renounced the mind and feelings of the flesh, and submit to the teaching of the Spirit new life begins. This is a mystery of life far surpassing our capacities to understand. The illuminating light of God's Word not only humbles us it gives us life.

PRAYER I exalt your name Lord God above all gods as I worship you on this Transfiguration Sunday and pray you open my mind to your glory as you did to Peter. IJNA



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Rev Bruce J VanDer Kolk