

Young People's Forum (III.14)

Dear Young People,

In the last forum article, I was talking about how the Psalms are really sung by Christ. This is true, not only because Christ inspired them in the Psalmists of Israel through his Holy Spirit, but also because many are prophetic of Christ and his work here on earth.

I was saying that Christ's resurrection is often spoken of in the Psalms that speak of Christ's ascension and exaltation. In our studies of Reformed Doctrine, we really do the same, although we do make a distinction. We speak of Christ's state of humiliation (which includes his birth, his suffering in which he suffered the anguish of hell, his death and his burial). But we also speak of his state of exaltation (which includes his resurrection, his ascension, his exaltation at God's right hand, and his coming again at the end of the world). And so both his resurrection, ascension and exaltation all are part of Christ's glory.

I was going to show why the Psalms identify Christ's resurrection and Christ's exaltation. The clearest Psalm is Psalm 2. It would be well if you would read the whole Psalm. It is one of my favorite Psalms.

The Psalm is speaking, historically, of all the enemy nations that surround Israel, and how they plot to destroy Israel. But, says the Psalm, God laughs. This always sends the chills down my spine. The wicked are, in their own eyes, very powerful and they think that they can easily defeat small Israel. God doesn't defeat them only – although he does that too, but he laughs at them. And he laughs because he has set his son on the holy hill of Zion.

That means that God laughs not only because God is sure of victory through his servant David, but that he even uses the raging of the heathen and their wild attacks against Zion to save Zion. They think they are fighting against God, but all they are doing is accomplishing God's will.

It is like an army in the field, fighting the enemy. But at the headquarters of the enemy sits one, directing the battle, who is really on the other side, and gives orders that will guarantee the defeat of the forces he is directing.

But this is prophecy and refers to Christ, the Son of David, of whom David was a type. God's Son, Jesus Christ, is set by God on the true Zion in heaven at God's right hand (Hebrews 12:22). He did this wonderful work when Christ was raised from the dead (Acts 13:33, Rom. 1:4). And, at the same time, Psalm 2 refers to the crowning of Christ as Lord of lords and King of kings. At God's right hand Christ rules also over the wicked and makes them serve his purpose.

But the Lord will scorn them all,
Calm he sits enthroned on high;
Soon His wrath will on them fall,
Sore displeased He will reply:
Yet according to My will
I have set My King to reign,
And on Zion's holy hill

My Anointed I maintain.

This His word shall be made known,
This Jehovah's firm decree;
Thou art my beloved On,
Yes, I have begotten Thee.
All the earth at Thy request
I will give Thee for Thy own;
That Thy might shall be confessed
And Thy foes be overthrown. (Psalter No. 3)

Psalm 47 speaks of the ascension of Christ. Psalter numbers 129 and 130 both sing of it. The Psalms speak of God, not Christ, but God has done all that the Psalm says through Christ, and Christ is God.

All nations clap your hands,
Let shouts of triumph ring.
For mighty over all the lands
The Lord Most High is King.

Above our mighty foes
He gave us power to stand,
And as our heritage He chose
The goodly promised land.

With shouts ascends our King.
With trumpet's stirring call;
Praise God, praise God, His praises sing,
For God is Lord of all.

O sing in joyful strains,
And make His glory known;
God over all the nations reigns,
And holy is His throne.

Our fathers God to own
The kings of earth draw nigh,
For none can save but God alone,
He is the Lord Most High.

There is one more Psalm that I want to refer to. That is Psalm 68. David wrote this Psalm at the time he took the ark of the covenant out of the house of Obededom to Jerusalem. David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, saw this event as a type of the ascension of Christ. And so he wrote Psalm 68.

O Lord, Thou hast ascended
On high in might to reign;
Captivity Thou leadest
A captive in thy train.
Rich gifts to Thee are offered
By men who did rebel,
Who pray that now Jehovah

Their God with them may dwell.

Sing unto God, ye nations,
Ye kingdoms of the earth;
Sing unto God, all people,
And praise His matchless worth.
He rides in royal triumph
Upon the hea'ns abroad;
He speaks, the mountains tremble
Before the voice of God. (Psalter No. 183).

It is sometimes said that the Psalms do not speak of those events in Christ's life that are important to us. But this is not true. And the Psalms speak of these events in a far more beautiful way than any of the hymns.

Cordially in Christ,

Prof