



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship — 1 February 2015

Theme for the Year: "Out of Myself and into the Savior" (Ezekiel 14:4-6)

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| Prelude | <i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i> |
| Call to Worship | |
| *Opening Hymn | 64 - <i>The Name of Jesus</i> |
| *Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i> | |
| Responsive Reading | Psalm 96 |
| The Lord's Supper | |
| Hymn | 191 - <i>Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face</i> |
| Hymn | Insert - <i>Ascribe Unto the LORD</i> |
| Tithes & Offering | |
| *† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer | |
| Scripture Reading | Esther 5:6-6:12 |
| Hymn | 233 - <i>Depth of Mercy</i> |
| Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer | |
| Sermon | "Eaten Up By Little Things" |
| *Closing Hymn | 325 - <i>More Like the Master</i> |
| *Benediction & † <i>Threefold Amen</i> | |
| Silent Prayer & Postlude | <i>The Lord Bless You and Keep You</i> |
| Announcements | † <i>Inside cover of hymnal</i> |

**Congregation standing*

Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church meets every Sunday at 3:00 pm
at 47 Davis Road, Attadale, Western Australia
Website: www.covenantbpc.org.au
Email: pastor@covenantbpc.org.au

Why Should We Sing the Psalms? They Can Be So...Dark

The Psalms Seem So Dark

Last week, we read that we should not pray for those whom we know have sinned the sin of death (WCF XXI:4). These reject Christ and his people. It was asked how we should pray for them.

At the session and church retreat, it was asked why we sing the Psalms when they aren't always immediately accessible to New Covenant saints.

This article aims to answer both concerns. It is true that the Psalms are not immediately accessible - they are dark and wordy. It is true that they contain the theme of judgment. So why should we sing them?

Singing the Psalms Educates Us

Hebrews 8:13 speaks about the Old Covenant being obsolete. The Psalms were the songbook of the Old Covenant. If the Old Covenant is obsolete, then why should we sing the Psalms?

The way we look at the law of God provides us with a helpful way to think about the Psalms. The law of God is forever binding - it is a perfect rule of righteousness.

While we no longer practice the ceremonial laws (because they have been fulfilled by Christ), these laws teach us about our need for cleansing.

And while we do not practice the civil laws (because the church is not a civil nation), these laws teach us about equity and justice.

The moral law, which we do still practice, are a perfect rule of righteousness and piety.

We should study the whole law in order to know what God requires of us, to know Christ from the ceremonies, and to learn equity from the civil laws. The Psalms contain all these laws. Therefore, to sing the Psalms is to learn piety, repentance, Christ, and justice.

This can't be achieved unless we sing some of the "darker" themed Psalms - of judgment, death, and cursing.

These Dark Themes Are Also in the New Covenant

But these themes are also present in the New Testament! This shows that the Psalms and the themes are not obsolete.

When the people in Revelation conquered the beast and its image, they sang "*the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb*" (Rev 15:3).

They sang the songs of the Old Covenant and the songs of the New Covenant.

And if they sang the songs of the Old Covenant, they sang the Psalms. And much of the Psalms are helpful to teach us of the human condition - when we suffer, we go to God; when we rejoice, we rejoice because of God; when we are angry, we go to God for comfort.

They contain many things that we would never find in the hymns of the New Covenant. It is also good to sing God's Words back to God.

But the Psalms contain some words which are very hard to sing. For example, Psalm 137:8-9 says, "*O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.*"

How do we sing the destruction of little ones and the destruction of the daughter of Babylon? How can we sing about vengeance?

We have to understand these things in light of the New Testament. Revelation 17 speaks of the fall of "Babylon" and her destruction - she is described as a woman sitting on a beast, who was responsible for the death of many saints and martyrs. She is called the harlot!

And when she was destroyed, the saints cried out in Revelation 19:1-2 saying, "*Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with*

her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand."

Singing About God's Vengeance Is Right

We need to remember that vengeance is a good thing. While Scripture warns us not to take revenge, we are reminded that God will take revenge - "*Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord*" (Rom 12:19).

Therefore, according to this verse, God's people should pray that God will bring vengeance against his enemies.

When is it appropriate to pray for God's destruction on his enemies? Jesus prayed for forgiveness for his tormentors (Luke 23:34). Even David said in Psalms 35 and 109 that he prayed and fasted for his enemies. But there also came a time when David asked God to destroy them.

Jesus' prayer does not mean we never pray for vengeance against God's

enemies. There are so many, like ISIS, and in the past who do harm to God's people - these are God's enemies, who like the Whore of Babylon, have killed many of God's people and made martyrs of them. We pray that God would take revenge and judge them.

We do not seek to curse our personal enemies nor harm them. But we pray that God would judge his enemies as in Psalm 94.

Conclusion

While we often prefer to avoid themes of darkness, depression, cursing, and death, we cannot do so without ignoring New Testament teaching on the subject.

One of the best ways of renewing our understanding and piety in such matters would be to sing the "hard" psalms, singing them in the light of the glory of Christ. ~ Pastor



Westminster Confession of Faith XXI - Of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath Day

5. The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear,¹ the sound preaching² and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith and reverence,³ singing of psalms with grace in the heart;⁴ as also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God;⁵ beside religious oaths,⁶ vows,⁷ solemn fastings,⁸ and thanksgivings upon special occasions,⁹ which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner.¹⁰
6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the Gospel, either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed:¹¹ but God is to be worshipped everywhere,¹² in spirit and truth;¹³ as, in private families¹⁴ daily,¹⁵ and in secret, each one by himself;¹⁶ so, more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or wilfully to be neglected, or forsaken, when God, by His Word or providence, calls thereunto.¹⁷

1. Acts 15:21; Revelation 1:3

2. 2 Timothy 4:2

3. James 1:22; Acts 10:33; Matthew 13:19; Hebrews 4:2; Isaiah 66:2

4. Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; James 5:13

5. Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; Acts 2:42

6. Deuteronomy 6:13; Nehemiah 10:29

7. Isaiah 19:21; Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

8. Joel 2:12; Esther 4:16; Matthew 9:15; 1 Corinthians 7:5

9. Psalm 107; Esther 9:22

10. Hebrews 12:28.

11. John 4:21

12. Malachi 1:11; 1 Timothy 2:8

13. John 4:23-24

14. Jeremiah 10:25; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Job 1:5; 2 Samuel 6:18, 20; 1 Peter 3:7; Acts 10:2

15. Matthew 6:11

16. Matthew 6:6; Ephesians 6:18

17. Isaiah 56:6-7; Hebrews 10:25; Proverbs 1:20-21, 24; 8:34; Acts 13:42; Luke 4:16; Acts 2:42.

Worship Service Roster

| <i>Service</i> | <i>This Week (1.2.15)</i> | <i>Next Week (8.2.15)</i> |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Speaker | Mark Chen | Glen Lock |
| Worship Leader | Mark Chen | Jimmy Orchard |
| Pianist | Elizabeth Huang | Valerie Ong |
| Welcomers | Jacob & Merilyn Woo | Yen Fye & Angela Yap |
| Offering Stewards | David Pang, Jacob Woo | David Lim, Ken Hong |
| Usher | Merilyn Woo | Angela Yap |
| Kitchen Duties | May Poon*, Florence Orchard Ken Hong, Merilyn Woo | Lisa Lim*, Adeline Ng Aliza Chiu |
| <i>Prayer Meeting</i> | <i>4 February 2015</i> | <i>11 February 2015</i> |
| Speaker | Jimmy Orchard | Terence Lee |
| Chairperson | SK Loh | Jonathan Ong |
| Pianist | Jerome Ng | Merilyn Orchard |

Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshipers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. Next week's messenger is Glen Lock, Pastor of Attadale Baptist Church. He will be speaking on "God's Chesed Love Endures Forever" (Exodus 34:4-10).
3. Sunday School teachers for the month of February are Aliza Chiu, Lisa Lim, Stephanie Lim, Jenni Budiman; Grace Lee, Esther Ong; Angela Yap; Sandra Tan, Wendy Gong; Jonathan Ong; Jabez Huang. Singspiration Leader: Eugene Lim, Pianist: Ian Tay.
4. Pastor will be away from 3 to 19 February. For pastoral care, please contact Mr Philip Gardiner, Pastor of Perth Free Presbyterian Church, 0459 693 339.
5. The Adult Bible Class is in recess on 8 and 15 February.
6. Junior Fellowship, Young Adults Fellowship, and Parents' Group commence this Friday.
7. Mukti Mission - Meet the Directors Dinner. Saturday, 7 February. Please select menu option and make payment. Urgent. Please see Merrill Read.
8. Shepherding a Child's Heart Parenting Conference. Speaker: Dr Tedd Tripp. Dates: Monday, 13 - Wednesday, 15 April 2015. Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm. Venue: Westminster Presbyterian Church (Bullcreek). Please register at www.covenantbpc.org.au/shepherding. Like and share it at www.facebook.com/shepherding.perth. Additional flyers are available at the foyer.

Appointments for the Week

WED 7:45 pm Prayer Meeting - Psalm 97
 FRI 7:45 am JF, YAF, and Parents' Group
 SUN 3:00 pm Worship & Sunday School

Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance

General Fund - \$3,387.75 (#455 - \$400.00, #456 - \$500.00). Missions Fund - \$380.00. Total Tithes & Offering - \$3,767.75. Attendance - 119.

Elders: **Mark Chen (Pastor)** 0415 932 373. **Jimmy Orchard** 0413 274 407.

Deacons: **Ken Chong** 0402 553 313. **LH Chua** 0435 601 373. **Terence Lee** 0418 845 617. **Johnson Lim** 0402 145 682. **SK Loh** 9386 1660.