

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School
Placerita Baptist Church
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Psalm 50 — A Subpoena from God

1.0 Introducing Psalm 50

- This is the first psalm attributed to Asaph in the Psalter.
 - ◆ Psalms 73–83 are psalms of Asaph (cp. 2 Chronicles 29:30; Nehemiah 12:46).
 - ◆ Asaph is a leader in the Temple's worship music (1 Chronicles 16:1-7).
- Note the narrow focus in this psalm ("Hear, O My people," v. 7) as compared to the previous psalm ("Hear this, all peoples," 49:1).
 - ◆ Compare "Hear, O Israel" in Deuteronomy 6:4.
- Zion again makes its appearance ("Zion, the perfection of beauty," v. 2). Compare Psalm 48:2.
- God's covenant with His people is prominent (vv. 5, 16). Compare Psalm 25:10, 14.
 - ◆ "The features that recall mount Sinai and the covenant (1-5), the allusions to the Ten Commandments (7, 18-20), and the reference to reciting these and to professing allegiance to the covenant (16), combine to give the impression of a ceremony of covenant remembrance and renewal as the setting of the psalm."—Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1–72*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 186.

Reading Psalm 50 (NAU)

50:1 A Psalm of Asaph.

The Mighty One, God, the LORD, has spoken,
And summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

50:2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God has shone forth.

50:3 May our God come and not keep silence;
Fire devours before Him,
And it is very tempestuous around Him.

- 50:4** He summons the heavens above,
And the earth, **to judge His people:**
- 50:5** “Gather My godly ones to Me,
Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.”
- 50:6** And the heavens declare His righteousness,
For God Himself is judge. **Selah.**
- 50:7** “Hear, O My people, and I will speak;
O Israel, I will testify against you;
I am God, your God.
- 50:8** “I do not reprove you for your sacrifices,
And your burnt offerings are continually before Me.
- 50:9** “I shall take no young bull out of your house
Nor male goats out of your folds.
- 50:10** “For every beast of the forest is Mine,
The cattle on a thousand hills.
- 50:11** “I know every bird of the mountains,
And everything that moves in the field is Mine.
- 50:12** “If I were hungry I would not tell you,
For the world is Mine, and all it contains.
- 50:13** “Shall I eat the flesh of bulls
Or drink the blood of male goats?
- 50:14** “Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving
And pay your vows to the Most High;
- 50:15** Call upon Me in the day of trouble;
I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.”
- 50:16** But to the wicked God says,
“What right have you to tell of My statutes
And to take My covenant in your mouth?”
- 50:17** “For you hate discipline,
And you cast My words behind you.
- 50:18** “When you see a thief, you are pleased with him,
And you associate with adulterers.
- 50:19** “You let your mouth loose in evil
And your tongue frames deceit.
- 50:20** “You sit and speak against your brother;
You slander your own mother’s son.
- 50:21** “These things you have done and I kept silence;
You thought that I was just like you;
I will reprove you and state *the case* in order before your eyes.
- 50:22** “Now consider this, you who forget God,
Or I will tear *you* in pieces, and there will be none to deliver.
- 50:23** “He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me;
And to him who orders *his way aright* I shall show the salvation of God.”

For the choir director.



2.0 Understanding Psalm 50

2.1 Outline

- I. Call to Judgment (vv. 1-6)
- II. Condemnation of Heartless Worship (vv. 5-15)
- III. Condemnation of Hypocritical Worship (vv. 16-21)
- IV. Call to Repentance (vv. 22-23)



2.2 Notes

- **v. 1** “The Mighty One, God, the LORD”
 - *El, Elohim, Yahweh.*
 - The first two names are characteristic of Book 2 and are generic titles of deity.
 - *Yahweh* is not as common in Book 2, but is God’s covenant name.
 - See Joshua 22:22, the only other occurrence of these three divine titles in this fashion.
- **v. 4** “the heavens . . . the earth”
 - See the same witnesses to the original covenant agreement in Deuteronomy 4:26.
 - Compare Isaiah 1:2.
- **v. 4** “to judge His people”
 - Compare 1 Peter 4:17.
 - Compare Luke 12:48 with Hebrews 7:22.
- **v. 6** “Selah.”
 - *Upon what are we to meditate?*
 - *What are some New Testament passages that deal with this same issue?*
- **v. 8** The Right View of Sacrifices
 - Sacrifices in and of themselves have no benefit. The attitude of the offerer is significant.
 - See Isaiah 1:11-15; Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8.
 - True worship recognizes the fact that everything we bring to God is already His—including ourselves.
- **v. 16** “tell of My statutes”
 - See Deuteronomy 31:10-13.
- **v. 17** “you hate discipline”
 - *Why is this characteristic of rebellion addressed by God?*
 - *What might be involved in New Testament application to us?*
- **vv. 18-19** Ten Commandments
 - The hypocrites have violated three of the last five commandments.
 - The 7th (theft), 8th (adultery), and 9th (false witness) commandments.

- v. 21 “I kept silence”
 - “The wicked foolishly think they have God as confused about their true motives as their human contemporaries. Because God has done nothing to strike them down, they assume he is unconcerned, or even worse, that he is ‘altogether like them’ (50.21).”—Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms Volume 1*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 764.
 - Compare verse 3.
- v. 22 “you who forget God”
 - This refers to the second group of Israelites addressed in verses 16-21.
 - Compare “forget” in Deuteronomy 4:9, 23, 31; 6:12; 8:11, 14; Psalm 119:61, 83, 93, 109, 141.
 - Compare verse 17.
- v. 23 “a sacrifice of thanksgiving”
 - Compare with verses 14-15.
 - This links back to the first group of Israelites addressed in verses 7-15.
- v. 23 “who orders *his way aright*”
 - This refers to a focused concentration on spiritual matters.
 - Compare Philippians 3:8-14.

3.0 Singing Psalm 50



This Is My Father's World

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world: He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass;
He speaks to me everywhere.

This is my Father's world. O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world: why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King; let the heavens ring!
God reigns; let the earth be glad!

This is my Father's world, dreaming, I see His face.
I ope my eyes, and in glad surprise cry, “The Lord is in this place.”
This is my Father's world, from the shining courts above,
The Beloved One, His Only Son,
Came—a pledge of deathless love.

This is my Father's world, should my heart be ever sad?
The lord is King—let the heavens ring. God reigns—let the earth be glad.
This is my Father's world. Now closer to Heaven bound,
For dear to God is the earth Christ trod.
No place but is holy ground.

This is my Father's world. I walk a desert lone.
In a bush ablaze to my wondering gaze God makes His glory known.
This is my Father's world, a wanderer I may roam
Whate'er my lot, it matters not,
My heart is still at home.

— Words: Maltbie D. Babcock (1901)

Music: Traditional English melody arranged by Franklin L. Sheppard (1915)

4.0 Praying Psalm 50

- Amen. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. [vv. 1-6; cp. Rev 22:20]
- Lord, teach me how to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving. [v. 14]
- Father, teach me to love Your Word and Your discipline. [v. 17]
- Lord, cause me to focus on spiritual things. [v. 23]
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5.0 Applying Psalm 50

- God will judge His people for heartless and hypocritical worship.
- True worship and true sacrifices are from a heart faithful to God's Word.
- Believers who despise God's disciplinary chastening have already despised His Word.