

Dear Friend

Today we are looking at Psalm 115 which is the second to last in this series. This and Psalm 116 were sung after the Jewish festival meal of the Passover, with Psalms 114 and 115 before the meal. It is likely that Jesus would have heard these Psalms at the Last Supper before he was arrested. It is one of the Hallel psalms and has "Praise the Lord" at the end.

Some translations have the title "The Impotence of Idols and the Greatness of God" for this psalm and this is a good summary of its main message. My chief source of information for these meditations is "Reflections on the Psalms" published by Church House Publications.

This Psalm draws a great contrast between the lifeless idol - a dead thing made by the hands of people who, by worshipping this idol, will end up as lifeless as the thing itself - and the living God who is not only the source of life but *is* life. In contrast, those who put their trust in, and worship God, will become more and more like him until in his glory they will share in his very nature and being.

Archbishop Sentamu comments on this psalm saying:

"Compare the impotence of idols with the power of God. Choose wisely. Choose the 'maker of heaven and earth' (v.15), who has power to help; praise him daily, unlike those who go 'down in silence' (v. 17). God is high above creation, glorious, free to act as he wills and choosing to help and shield those who call upon him.

"God is not a dead thing but is living and personal. Though active within the world, God is never contained or constrained by the word. Above all, you and I can know that God is alive, for as we give him the honour due his name, we find real, eternal life in him."

Well, that's a good commentary that works for me: God is so much more alive and powerful than any idols we might find in our lives. In our time, idols might not be those gold and silver figures mentioned in the psalm, but love of money or fashion or fast cars. So the psalm tells us to set our sights on God and leave the rest behind!

Today's important verse is:

But we will bless the LORD
from this time on and for evermore.
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 115 v18

Let us pray:

Living God,
defend us from the idols which our hearts enthrone,
that we may not go down into silence
but be raised to our heaven of heavens.
In Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.