

PM Psalm 114

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[0 : 00] Let's read the Word of God now from 1 Peter chapter 2 verses 1 to 12 and then later the book of Psalms in Psalm 114.

So 1 Peter 2 verses 1 to 12. So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.

Like newborn infants long for the pure spiritual milk that by it you may grow up into salvation. If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

As you come to him a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious. You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house.

To be a holy priesthood. To offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture.

[1 : 10] Behold I am laying in Zion a stone. A cornerstone chosen and precious. And whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.

So the honour is for you who believe. But for those who do not believe. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

And a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. They stumble because they disobey the word. As they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race. A royal priesthood. A holy nation. A people for his own possession.

That you may proclaim the excellencies of him. Who called you out of darkness. Into his marvellous light.

[2 : 13] Once you were not a people. But now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy.

But now you have received mercy. Beloved. I urge you as sojourners and exiles.

To abstain from the passions of the flesh. Which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honourable.

So that when they speak against you as evildoers. They may say your good deeds. And glorify God on the day of visitation.

And then in the book of Psalms. And Psalm 114. The book of Psalms. Psalm 114.

[3 : 08] Psalm 114. When Israel went out from Egypt. The house of Jacob from a people of strange language.

Judah became a sanctuary. Israel his dominion. The sea looked and fled. Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams.

The hills like lambs. What ails you O sea that you flee. O Jordan that you turn back. O mountains that you skip like rams.

O hills like lambs. Tremble O earth at the presence of the Lord. At the presence of the God of Jacob. Who turns the rock into a pool of water.

The flint into a spring of water. Amen. May the Lord bless to us. That reading of his own holy inspired word.

[4 : 12] Let's turn together now to Psalm 114. Psalm 113 to Psalm 118.

A fascinating section of the book of Psalms. Each of these Psalms had their own life setting before. But they were gathered together.

And they were used at a special time of year. For those who were Jewish believers. Then the time was of course the Passover.

When they would gather together. To encourage one another. And to worship the Lord. And they would use these Psalms to bring to mind.

What the Lord himself is like. So in Psalm 113. As we saw. He is the God who is able to reverse situations. There he is.

[5 : 12] He is relevant to the whole world. From the rising of the sun to its setting. The name of the Lord is to be praised. He is relevant to all time. From the right.

From. Blessed be the name of the Lord. From this time forth. And forevermore. He is high. And yet he affects things down here.

You and I need to encourage one another. By saying these things to one another. Remember. The Psalms are not just for addressing God. They are often to address one another.

To encourage one another. Even as we say. Praise the Lord. That we say to God. Praise the Lord. But it is actually one another.

We are addressing. Praise the Lord. Psalm 114. The one we are looking at this evening. Tells us something more.

[6 : 10] About God himself. And especially what you have. In verse 7 there. Tremble O earth. At the presence of the Lord. At the presence of the God of Jacob.

The presence of God. That would be the main emphasis. Of this particular Psalm. And don't you and I need to be. Reminded.

Of the presence of God. What did you see today? You saw the rain. You saw the brief moments of sun perhaps. You saw the clouds coming over.

You saw the land and the sea. You saw the geese. You saw so much. Did the presence of the Lord. Did the presence of the Lord strike you at all?

Did you understand. How much the presence of the Lord has been. Wherever you have been. The presence of the Lord. Tremble O earth.

[7 : 08] At the presence of the Lord. The presence of the God of Jacob. Literally. In the Hebrew here. It's tremble O earth. At the face of the Lord.

The Lord's face. The face of the God of Jacob. When God is present. His face is present.

He can see. He can hear. He can speak. The presence of the God of Jacob. And what response should we have.

To the presence of the God of Jacob. Says the psalmist. Tremble. Tremble O earth. At the presence of the Lord. At the face of the Lord.

At the face of the God of Jacob. We know that God's face you see. Has been made wonderfully known for us.

[8 : 09] In and through the passion and work of Jesus Christ. See there's so much about God. He wants us to know about. Some things he would explain to us.

By creating the world. And the world is a book of messages. We're able to look and learn of God. There are other things that he wants to tell us.

So he sends his prophets. To explain these things to us. And some. Not all. Some of these prophecies. Are written down for us.

In this book that we call. The Bible. And there are other things. That God could not possibly. Explain to us. Through creation.

Or through prophets. And he came in person. To explain it to us. He became a man. So that we would understand God.

[9 : 06] The glory of God. Dwelt among us. And we saw his glory. In Jesus Christ. Jesus came. Incarnate. And we were meant to look at him. Listen to him. Learn from him. And say. Ah. Now I understand. What God is like.

Remember what he said to Philip. Show us the Father. Said Philip. And Jesus said. Have I been so long a time with you. He who has seen me. Has seen the Father.

No prophet could have said that. No Moses could have said that. The whole of creation. Could never say that. But Jesus can say.

You've seen me. You have seen the Father. You want to know the impressiveness. The glory. The weight of the Father's character.

[10 : 04] You look at me. Because I have come. To make him known. To you. Now what do people do? They often say.

Well. There's the God of the Old Testament. He's a kind of a frightening God. A fearful God. A terrible God. But then we have the God and Father.

Of our Lord Jesus Christ. And he's so much easier to manage. Somehow he becomes a more cuddly God. We can put him. In our place.

No problem at all. We can have him into our house. The God of the Old Testament. They say. That's one thing. But the God of the New Testament. In Jesus. Ah.

So much easier to manage. You see. That's not the case. It's not the case at all. It is the God.

[11:00] Who has been revealed in the Old Testament. A God. Full. Of so much love. Of so much love. And compassion. Dealing with sinners in mercy.

That's the God. Whose grace. And truth. Have come to their fullness. In and through. Jesus Christ. Tremble.

Says the psalmist. At the presence of the Lord. At the face. Of the God of Jacob. See the word tremble there. It's the idea of.

Shudder. Shiver. It's as if an earthquake. Is going on. Inside you. This is not a little. Minor tremor. We're here. Talking about something. Quite seismic. We're talking here. About something. Really substantial. It's not that just.

[12:00] You feel a little. Eerie. At the thought. That the presence of God. Is here. The face of God. Is here. No. No. No. This is much.

Much more than that. Shudder. Shiver. Have that. Earthquake. Experience. Of course. Today. If people. Do. Take God. Seriously. At all. It's probably not. Trembling. Shivering. Shuddering.

The earthquake. Experience. On the inside. That's probably not. What's going to be seen. Very often. If God is. Held. At all. In their minds. He's a harmless.

God. And they might give. Some kind of. Benign. Approval. To him. He's. He's okay. He's. He's okay. We don't really need him. But he's on the scene.

[12:54] And that's okay. We don't feel threatened. By God. At all. How many people. Did you pass on the way. To church tonight. Do you think. Any of them. Feel threatened.

By God. At all. Or God. In and. Through the person. Of his son. Jesus. Do any of them. Tremble. At his face.

Probably not. Very few. Perhaps. He's a harmless. God. There are other people. And. Basically. They're saying. Well. God.

We actually. Do not need him. We can disregard him. So when they are being. Grant the children. By the Lord. And they want to raise. These children.

How are they going to shape. Their children's lives. Are they going to take. On board. God. Are they going to have. A world view. In which God. Is at the center. No.

[13:50] They're going to. Disregard that. So they'll choose. To send their children. To a school system. In which God. Really doesn't have much. Of a role anymore. They're going to teach.

Their children science. In which God. Doesn't have a thing. To say. History. Is not his story. Man. Has got nothing.

To do with God. He's not made. In the image of God. Man. Man is able to choose. To be. What he wants to be. To live. The way he wants to live.

Man looks inside. And says. This is what I am. And I'll be true to myself. And ignore. God. Disregard God. No trembling before God. It's not that they don't believe in him. Perhaps. But they just don't need him.

[14:49] Do you know how dishonoring to God that is? To name his name. And say. Well it's nice to have him on the scene. But.

He's just a harmless person. Or. I don't need him. Now. I don't think I'll need him tomorrow. And then there's the third group.

Who might say. Well. I reject him. I decidedly. I decidedly. Reject him. When you hear people who. Decidedly reject God. Increasingly that brings a chill. To my own bones. When I hear people. Very clearly saying.

I do not. Believe. Believe in God. I reject. I reject. I reject. I reject. His existence. That is such.

[15:48] A denial. That rocks. The inside. Of any true believer. If you ever become. Comfortable. With that kind of professed.

Atheism. Then there's something. Then there's something wrong with you. You are meant to shiver. And to shudder. When you hear that kind of.

Not only disregard. Disregard of God. But a decisive rejection. Of him. But what's the danger. With any of that. Well see the danger is.

You see that. Irrespective of what people say. About God. His face. Sees. Their face. He knows them.

Inside out. People might say. Well I'm not bothered. About the face of God. Whether it's there or not. Or I'm going to disregard him. And pretend he's not there. Or I'm going to totally reject him.

[16 : 50] The reality is. God's there. The face of God is present. He sees. Our face. He sees us.

Inside out. And whether people like it or not. The thing is. That we were made. To look. Into the face.

Of God. No man shall see me. And live. That is true. In the fallen world. God. But when we were made.

In the image of God. We were made. To a fellowship. With God. And he. Sees. Our face. And he sees us.

And knows us. Inside out. God. So it's terribly. Terribly sad. When you find people. Who disregard. The presence of God.

[17 : 46] As not needed. When they've actually been made. To have a relationship. With him. That of course. Was destroyed. By sin.

The second danger. Is that God's face. Could be hidden. Forever. Forever. That would be an awful thing.

Now. It's only people. Like yourselves. Perhaps. If you're Christians. It's only people. Like you. That can imagine. What a nightmare. This would be.

If you were to have. God's face. Hidden. From you. Choosing. Not to look at you. With any favour. Love.

Delight. At all. God. To hide. His face. From his people. That's the ultimate nightmare. And there may be experiences.

[18 : 45] That you and I. As Christians. Have. If we have displeased. The Lord. If we have backslidden. To a point. Where. We are. Essentially. Disregarding him.

In so many ways. Don't be surprised. If the Lord. Makes you aware. That he is hiding. His face. Because you have grieved.

His spirit. Another danger. Of course. Is that his face. Could focus. On your sins.

In the light. Of his holiness. And you would be cut off. In hell forever. You see. It's like the child. Who can put his hands. Over his eyes. And pretend. Somebody's not there. But that somebody. God. Is there.

[19 : 44] And if he chooses. To look. On us. And on our sins. In the light. Of his holiness. Tremble. Oh earth.

How fearful. How awful. But you might say to me. Yes. But that's Old Testament. Stuff. That's not the God. And father. Of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We don't need to have any fear. Of him. Really. Listen to what Paul says. When he writes to the Thessalonians. In chapter one.

He talks about the Lord Jesus. This is the future. The Lord Jesus. Is to be revealed. From heaven. With his mighty angels.

In flaming fire. Inflicting vengeance. On those who do not know God. And on those who do not obey.

[20 : 40] The gospel. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. So this is Jesus. He's going to appear. He's going to appear.

From heaven. With his mighty angels. In flaming fire. And he's going to bring vengeance. On those who don't know God. Who didn't choose.

To have a relationship with God. And on those who do not obey. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's a fearful situation. When you share in the gospel.

With people. You want them to come. And obey this gospel. The gospel is not just a message to be heard. It's a gospel to be obeyed.

And when we're sharing it. We've got to say to people. You've got to accept this message. Plead with them to accept it. And tell them. You are to obey the message.

[21 : 34] Because if you don't obey the message. There are the most awful consequences. Because God himself. Will come. Jesus will come. And his face.

Will look upon you. In vengeance. And in judgment. Isn't that what Jesus himself said. About that group of people.

Who were quite content for Jesus. To preach in their streets. Quite content for Jesus. To do miracles. And they thought they knew. Enough about Jesus.

Jesus. And Jesus. When he sees these people. Coming to him. At the end. He said. They're saying. Lord. Lord. And Jesus looks at them.

And says. I never knew you. You're calling me Lord. But you never obeyed the gospel. You're calling me Lord. But you didn't. Give me honor and glory.

[22 : 32] I never knew you. Depart from me. Or the book of the revelation. Revelation. To me. It's the most encouraging book.

In the whole of scripture. The book of the revelation. But part of that book. Is about the wrath of God. And of the lamb.

You cannot put a wedge. Between the God of the old testament. And the lamb of the new testament. His face.

Really matters. His presence. Really matters. But what happens. When you do. Take God seriously.

When you do. Properly shiver. Shiver. Shudder. And allow yourself. To understand.

[23 : 32] The face of God. In your life. Well see. That's what this. Psalm is about. First of all. When you take God seriously.

God makes you. His sanctuary. Sanctuary. See. When Israel went out from Egypt. The house of Jacob. From a people of strange language. Jacob.

Became a sanctuary. So you know the picture there. Here are the Israelites. In the land of Egypt. They're living among a people. Of strange language. They're in.

A geographical location. Egypt. They're among a people. Whose language. They might not. Understand well. And what does God do?

He takes them out from that geographical location. Out from these people. Whose language they don't understand. And he makes them. His. Holy.

[24 : 28] Place. He makes them his sanctuary. He comes to dwell. Among them. So they're no longer in Egypt. They're no longer among these people.

Whose language they don't understand. Now they're at home. Because the Lord makes his home. With them. Judah. Became his sanctuary.

And it's one of the most precious ways. Of thinking of what it's like. To be a Christian. God. Makes his home. In you. You become.

The holy place. Of God himself. God doesn't keep his distance from you. He draws near to you. He knows you. Stand before him.

You receive him. You accept him. In Jesus Christ. You're amazed at his grace. And as you believed in Christ. God himself says.

[25 : 26] I will come. And dwell among them. I will be their God. They will be my people. I will make them my sanctuary. And do you know how close God is to you tonight.

Closer to you than your very breath. He's in you. He's in you. Not just among you.

As the people of God. He's actually in you. If we use New Testament language. Jesus says. My Father and I will make our home.

Within them. How precious. This is. I will not just be with you. He says. I will be in you.

Take seriously that fact. For the moment. The presence of God. The face of God. The eyes of God.

[26 : 27] The ears of God. The voice of God. The presence of God. Is. In you. He makes you.

His sanctuary. The second thing. Judah didn't just become a sanctuary. Israel became his dominion. In other words.

Israel became literally. His kingdom. And what happens. The kingdom. Is the place. And the people. Who are very happy.

To acknowledge the king. They respect the king. They adore the king. They welcome the king. They worship the king. They don't say.

We'll keep our distance from him. We will live our life without him. We'll disregard him. Or. Or they. They will not say.

[27 : 24] He's harmless. We'll do our own thing. But he won't hurt us. No. These people take God really seriously. And they become his kingdom. They show their allegiance.

To the king himself. Before they were living in Egypt. Before they were among a people of strange language. But now. They are the kingdom of God.

And his will matter. When they were in Egypt. For a while. Egypt. Seemed to like. The God of the people of Israel.

The God of Joseph. But then I knew Pharaoh grew up. Who didn't like. The God of Joseph. And increasingly. The Israelites would have felt.

Out of place. In Egypt. But when God took them out from there. And came to dwell among them. As he did at Mount Sinai.

[28 : 25] They became. His dominion. His kingdom. You see. When he. Makes us his kingdom. We take him seriously.

And we say. What do you want me to do with my children? Raise them up in the fear. And instruction of the Lord. Lord. And we seek to do so.

Why? Because we are his kingdom. He gifts children to us. And we want to give them back to him. We want to do that. We want to serve him.

We want to use all the gifts that he has given to us. We want to be missionaries in life. We want to use all the time of every day. To serve him.

And of course. That means that we will be out of sync. With the people among whom we live. Just like. We are living in a people. Of strange language.

[29 : 26] Literally you feel as if. The people out there. Are talking a different language. From what you and I understand. So when we are given children by the Lord.

We take their gender. We take the way the Lord has made them. We don't reinterpret it. But increasingly the world. Is turning all of this.

Upside down. Was it last week. The House of Lords were debating. The euthanasia issues. They are trying to reinterpret.

What the length of life should be. Both at the beginning in abortion. Or in the end. With euthanasia. Just received a message.

While I was resting this afternoon. One of my lovely close friends is dying. And a widow of a minister. Who preached the gospel.

[30 : 26] And this lady is just on the way home. And it is good. That it is happening. In the Lord's timing.

The Lord's timing. Because she. And her family. Believe in the Lord. And they are in his kingdom. So they don't want to stop the suffering.

Because God so often has a reason. For the suffering. It is not something that escapes his plan. It is part of his plan. Well.

That is when I think tonight. Of what that family are enduring just now. They are in his kingdom. And they are saying. Your will be done.

Your will be done. So if I receive a text like I did today. I just replied back. Underneath. Are the everlasting arms. And they are.

[31 : 29] They are. You see. This person is so safe. So very. Very safe. In his kingdom. She gave her life to him.

And served. In so many ways. But that's what. When we take God seriously. He makes us his sanctuary. He makes us his kingdom.

And then. He provides for us. He provides for us. See. When the Israelites came out of Egypt. What happened. They came to the Red Sea.

At the beginning of their journey. What happened to that Red Sea. The sea looked. And fled. Here's this big obstacle. Who's going to.

Get them through the sea. God says. No problem. You're my holy people. You're my kingdom. And the sea looks.

[32 : 27] And says. What? This is the Lord's people. And it just opens up. That's the picture. At the beginning of your journey. The Lord makes provision for you. Then at the end of the journey.

As they're going into the promised land. How are they going to cross the Jordan? No problem. Jordan turned back. The Jordan River again opened up.

And they went through the sea. On dry land. This is the Lord. Just opening up the way before them. Making provision for them.

No obstacle. Will ever come before God's people. That he won't take them through. Do you actually believe that?

That no obstacle. Will ever come before you. In the providence of God. That he will not take you through. It's not the things that.

[33 : 28] You imagine will happen. As part of your life's experience. You think. Yes I'll be comfortable with this. I'll be comfortable with that. But. Don't put me in that situation.

Because I'll never be able to cope. Listen my friends. God puts you in these situations. And you think. There's no way ahead.

There's no way through that sea. And again. And again. And again. He parts the sea. The sea looks and flees.

Jordan turns back. The Lord makes provision for you. The odds. Seem to be impossible. And you think. Never.

Never. Will we get through. But God's presence. God's face. Makes all the difference. See that's what it says here.

[34 : 26] What ails you O sea. That you flee. O Jordan. That you turn back. Or the mountains. On Mount Sinai. That you skip like rams. O hills like lambs. What made you flee?

Was it just the arrival of two million people? The Israelites? No. It was that God was there. The presence of the God of Jacob.

The face of God had come near. Of course we had to flee. Of course the mountains skipped like rams. The language seemed so whimsical.

Bouncy. Playful. It's as if the writer here is just enjoying writing this. But he's writing from his own experience.

He knows what it's like. To experience the presence of the face of God. In his own life's experience.

[35 : 26] The odds seem impossible. But God's presence makes all the difference. Do you believe that?

I don't know what tomorrow holds for any of you. I don't know if you commit your life to him. What that will do. But I know.

That God will never. Ever. Ever fail you. I can promise you that. With all certainty.

More than that. God has this way of transforming opportunities. See the last verse there. He turns the rock into a pool of water.

The flint into a spring of water. Here God. It seems. He's making the big mistake. His sat nav has gone wrong.

[36 : 28] He's leading the people out into the desert for a start. That doesn't look promising. And even in the desert. He's leading them. And there's thirsty people. And he comes to this cliff edge.

It's just rock. Anybody looking on. And the devil and the demons looking on. Thought. What's going on here? God surely lost it.

Something's out of place. Here he's got these millions of people. In front of a rock. And there's no way. They're going to survive.

Out there in the heat. And in the desert. And then God just says. Just tap the rock. Or.

Just speak to the rock. What? Are you? Really? Yeah. Just. And what happens?

[37 : 27] The rock. Bursts open. And water flows. Today when my friend was praying down stage.

We were thanking the Lord for the rain. That was a good reminder. In the desert. When that rock broke open. It wasn't a few drips that came out.

It was enough to feed. It was enough to feed. And sustain. A thirsty people. Millions. In number.

And it looked so unpromising. It looked as if. No good can come from this. But you see. That's what God's presence does.

He's able to find something that is so unpromising. And make it a place of wealth. And joy.

[38 : 34] And plenty. It really is. One of the most lovely things you can do. Sit down. Think back.

What rock faces have you been to? And the Lord has transformed them. And out of the rock came the water. And he sustained you.

The Lord has done that. So much for you. I'm absolutely sure. The presence of the God of Jacob. You're going to be evangelising.

Around this area. Around your own homes. You're not going to make the mistake. Of saying. We'll wait for a minister.

We'll wait for a full time worker. You're not going to make that mistake. Why? Because you are taught of the Lord. The Lord himself.

[39 : 42] Is among you. You are his sanctuary. You are his dominion. He can make hills skip.

He can part waters. He can transform. What seems impossible. And unpromising. Into absolute fountains.

Of life. And vibrant joy. Don't listen to the evil one. That says. We'll wait. Before we work.

No. I've lived long enough. To know. How congregations. Grow. In so called vacancies. In fact.

The lady. Who I'm thinking of. In my mind. Her husband. Was a pastor. In one of these congregations. Acts. Where I preached.

[40 : 42] My first ever sermon. On. I will build. My church. I will build. My church. And the gates of hell. Will not. Strike against it.

Will not. That congregation. Was vacant. For years. And during the periods. Of vacancy. The Lord. Was converting.

One. After another. After another. After another. And when this lady's husband. Came to be a Minister.

In the congregation. It had grown. During the vacancy. And he was gifted. This congregation. And under his ministry.

In fellowship. With her. It continued. To see growth. Take. The word. Seriously. Shiver.

[41 : 40] Shudder. Have that. Earthquake experience. Take God. Seriously. In your evangelism. In your.

Discipleship. In your. Raising. Of your. Families. For the Lord. And in using. All the gifts. That he has given. To you. God's face.

God's presence. Makes all the difference. One day. We will awake. We will awake. And. In some way.

We will be able. To see him. We will be able. To enjoy him. And. And we will be. What we aren't yet.

We will be. Like him. Like him. Perfection. So. Work.

[42 : 38] And labor now. Without weary. Let us pray. Our heavenly father. Lord. Oh. You are such a. Precious.

Precious God. You give us. Lord. Things that are so hard. To carry. But you. Yourself. Not only help us.

To carry these things. But you carry us. As we carry. These burdens. We believe.

Lord. That. You are the one. Who. Will never. Ever. Fail your people. And you will open. The sea. Before them. You'll transform.

The rocks. Into water. And we know. Lord. That we will look back. And we will give. Thanks to you. But even as we go forward. Just now.

[43 : 40] And even though we can't see. Everything clearly. Help us Lord. To walk by faith. And not by sight. We ask it in the name of Jesus.

Amen.