

Dr. Bruce Waltke, Psalms, Lecture 20

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This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 20, Sacred Sites, Seasons, Objects, and Personnel.

In your notes, I noticed the three steps that the psalmist takes down the ladder of faith. And then the seven steps by which he walks back up to attain the highest levels of faith. And the turning point comes when he enters into the temple. And I assume he sees the symbolisms of God that restore his faith.

Logically speaking, his first step down is in verse three, when he says, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. In other words, he began his view of life with what can be called a keyhole theology. He was determining reality by what he could see within the limited horizon of his own experience, which would maybe be 70 or 80 years.

It's like a horse with blinders on and taking a view of reality from what he can see. And what he sees in verses four and five is he sees the prosperity of the wicked. In verses six through eight, he sees that they are ungodly and they're wicked in what they do and scoff and speak with malice.

And they're not only ungodly, they are ungodly without God for all practical purposes. Their mouths claim to heaven. Their tongues take possession of the earth.

Verse 11, they say, how would God know? I don't know anything. So, they live without God. Then he summarizes his problem in verse 12.

This is what the wicked are like, always carefree. They go on amassing wealth. And then his own contrast is that he is, while he keeps the covenant, being afflicted.

His mistake fundamentally is, as Bishop Ross puts it, his basic mistake is that he was defining God by his problem rather than allowing God to define his problem. He started with his problem and then he defined God. If you start with your problem, you may conclude God does not exist.

Or if he does exist, he's not necessarily good or just his other sublimity. So, you start with the problem. This is his first step down and away from God when he defines God by his problem.

His second step down and away from God is that when he envied, in other words, he made their prosperity his God, he was envying them. It is not wrong to be perplexed. It is normal in the Christian experience to be perplexed.

Paul makes that point in 2 Corinthians chapter four, referring to the experience of the apostolic community. He says in chapter four, verses six, let's see, verses four, six through eight. Well, I'll start with six.

For God who said, let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. Now note verse eight, we are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed, perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not abandoned, struck down, but not destroyed.

So, it's not wrong to be perplexed by our sufferings. That is normal Christian experience, but to envy and make prosperity and our expectation to make that our God is sin because it's no longer being content with God and trusting him. The third step down is he almost lost his foothold.

That is to say, he almost stepped out of the realm of faith of trusting God who keeps his covenants. Notice his seven steps back toward God. In verse 15, he couldn't live with his philosophy of life that God rewards evil and punishes the good.

If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children. He couldn't teach it. His whole conscience could not go there, but it was one or the other.

Either God is good and allows the suffering or there's suffering and God is not good. He could not teach. God is not good.

His heart wouldn't allow it. He says that he was troubled by all this. When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply.

But notice his second point. He entered the sanctuary of God. In other words, he went to a place where he could meet God in his crisis.

The problem with some people is that when they're in a crisis, they walk away from God and never give themselves an opportunity for God to meet them and to help them through the crisis. But the critical one is that he entered the sanctuary. He's in the sanctuary.

Then I understood their final destiny. There he saw the symbols of God's holiness, of his mercy, of his everlasting life, of his final victory. When he saw all that, he knew that was truth.

Those symbols of God spoke deeply to him. That's why they're in Scripture that we can live in imagination. When we see the truths of God in our imagination, and we live in the temple and they all find their expression in Jesus Christ, and we see his

death and his resurrection, those symbols enable us to withstand and understand the end of the wicked, the final destiny of the wicked.

He realizes that when he is looking just at material things, he is no more than an animal. He was just a brute in the field. He says I was senseless and ignorant.

I was a brute beast before you. Then in verses 23 and 24, he recognizes that the Lord is taking him by his right hand and leading him to glory. Yet I am always with you.

You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel and afterward, you will take me to glory. So, he's able to transcend the keyhole theology.

He realizes that through all his sufferings, God has taken him by the hand and actually strengthened him and leading him to the point of glory. Just as he took Christ by the hand and took him through the wilderness and took him through all the temptations and tested the steel and prepared him for his final victories. He took Israel through the wilderness.

He took David through the wilderness of his experience of being rejected by Saul, learning to live by faith. God takes us by the right hand, and leads us through our crisis in order to strengthen us and lead us to the final glory in his presence. Finally, then in verse 25, he finds who have I in heaven but you and earth has nothing I desire besides you.

In other words, I have God. I ask myself, why do I want to go to heaven? Well, I look forward to meeting my parents again and some of my relatives and that's good. But if Jesus isn't there, I'm not really interested.

It's Jesus that makes heaven, heaven. That's the beauty of heaven. It's Christ himself and all this loveliness.

And then finally, he has God now. So, left with the balance of the masses of riches or having God, which would you prefer? I'll take the eternal sublime God over temporal riches that rust and fade and can lead us into evil behavior. But I got into the psalm because the temple symbolized eternal truths.

The next point I'd like to make about the function of the Psalms is that they are typical, I mean, not of the Psalms, but of the cultus. It is typical. It's a divinely intended visible form to portray the eternal reality and what will become real or actual in the future.

In other words, here we have in heaven, we have the eternal reality. It's spiritual. I don't think we can, it's a mystery.

We can never fully understand it, but it's a reality in eternity. Something is and what is, is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit who was and is and will be evermore. That is what is.

And the temple portrayed that reality. It was a copy of the heavenlies. And it was a copy of that at the heart of it is God's transcendent ethical will, as we were describing the temple.

So, on a synchronic level, it is a type in that sense of heaven by which we can imagine heaven and understand it. But on the diachronic level, it's not only an example, a picture, a copy of heaven, but it's a type of the greater to come. So that the temple is the presence of God and so forth is a type of Christ in whom God dwells in all of his fullness.

It's a type of the church that is the temple of God, his holiness, his eternal life, his presence, his sacraments. And so, it's a type that finds its fulfillment in Christ and the church, but there's more. There's still the consummation when we come to the heavenly reality itself when we come to the risen Christ with his spiritual body, and we will have new bodies, resurrected spiritual bodies.

We will actually be in a reality that is beyond words for us to express. So, this is the function of the cult. It is a type of heaven.

It's a copy of heaven and it's a type of what is to come. And that's what I'm suggesting is the second function of the cultus. The third function is sacramental that actually by these physical realities with spiritual words, you actually enter into communion with God as the priest would eat the bread, as he would offer up the sacrifice, as they would find forgiveness.

They were actually participating in the life and forgiveness of God. And finally, in addition to being symbolic and being exemplary and typical and being sacramental, fourthly, I say it's artistic, it's propaganda. It's in the best sense of the word to promote an idea, or an ideology, and architecture can do that.

I remember when I was just about, I think four years of age, possibly five, my parents took me to visit an uncle who was working in Washington, DC. It made such an impact upon me that those marble buildings, that classic Greek architecture, spoke of power. It spoke of authority.

It spoke of endurance. It really spoke deeply into my being when I went back, maybe 50, 60 years later, even though I could remember where everything was, it made such an impression upon me. That's why the church-built cathedrals.

It spoke of God's, of the church's permanence, of its authority. That's why the universities in the Enlightenment, tried by their grandiose architecture to replace the church with the secular state. For example, if you go here to the University of Washington and you go to their library, it looks exactly like a cathedral.

It has triple-arched recessed doorways as you enter into it. It has stained glass windows. It has niches with statues on it.

But instead of having statues of Paul or John or the apostles or so forth, they have statues of Rousseau, Voltaire, and the rationalists. It's a new form of worship. And when you're on that campus, that impacts the student that this is the reality.

This is the value of architecture. It speaks of reality. I'm suggesting that that's why we have the Songs of Zion because they tell you to come to Zion and take a look at what God is doing because it's a way of communicating on another level besides words.

Here's the beautiful psalm, I think, a song, a psalm of the sons of Korach. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise in the city of our God, his holy mountain. Beautiful in loftiness, the joy of the whole earth.

Like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the great king. By the way, this too is an allusion to the Ugaritic myths because the mountain of Baal was Zaphon and Zaphon also means the north. So just like the sea in Israel means the west and the Negev can mean the south, this mountain can mean the north.

So, it's the mountain in the north where Baal was worshipped. It was thought to be what Zion was to Israel, Zaphon was to the Canaanite people who worshiped Baal. So he says, it's like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion.

Zaphon in the Ugaritic literature was also known as the city of the great king. God is in her citadels. He has shown himself to be her fortress.

When the kings joined forces, when they advanced together, they saw her and were astounded. They fled in terror at Zion. Trembling seas and their pain like that of a woman in labor.

You destroyed them like ships of Tarshish and shattered by an east wind. As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the Lord Almighty, in the city of God, God makes her secure forever. Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love.

Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness. Mount Zion rejoices.

The villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments. He says to the congregation, walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers, consider well her ramparts, view her citadels that you may tell of them to the next generation. For this God is our God forever and ever.

He will be our God even to the end. And so you have these songs of Zion that celebrate the greatness of Zion. They invite you to come and look at these buildings that for that time spoke of God's permanence, endurance, authority, and strength.

Well, that's looking at the cultus generally. We have defined it. We've seen the sacred site as the temple, as its engraving.

We've seen some of its functions. Now we look at the aspects of the cultus. Here we need to divide those aspects that were begun by Moses and those that were introduced with the temple.

So the aspects of the cultus began with the Mosaic tent and it was replaced with the royal temple. In the Moses period, what they had was a sacred site. That is wherever the tent or the tabernacle was pitched.

That was the site where God was located, but it was never stipulated at one site where it would be. There were sacred objects. There was the ark.

There was the tent. There were the vessels. There was the ephod on the priest.

There was the urim and the thummim within his breastplate. There were the sacred seasons of Passover that occurred in connection with the barley harvest. There was Pentecost that occurred in connection with the wheat harvest.

There was Sukkot in the new year, which was connected with the pressing of the grape and the pressing of the olive. There was sacred personnel. Moses gave all of that.

He also provided for sacred sacrifices, and sacred offerings, but there are almost no words. There's no music. The only words we have is that when you brought your first fruit, you said, a wandering Aramean was my father.

And you'll find that in Deuteronomy chapter 26. David now greatly expands this cultus. He builds on that, but David transforms it.

He transforms it into opera. He provides staging of the temple. He provided the libretto and the music in the Psalms.

And so now accompanying the Mosaic ritual, we now have it almost, David is like a Mozart to me. And more than that, he's a Renaissance man. But he took the Mosaic cultus and he gave it the staging of the temple and he gave it the music and the libretto of the Psalms that would accompany the ritual.

Moreover, the sacred site was now located at Jerusalem and the sacred personnel was now expanded beyond the house of Aaron and the Levites. The sacred personnel now include the king along with prophets. With the king comes prophecy because the prophet represents God to the king.

So now we have, in addition to the priests, we now have a sacred king and the prophet who would speak to the king. We're going to hear the prophet speak in the Psalms, especially Psalm 50. Generally speaking, then we have the sacred site, which was the Mosaic tent replaced by the royal temple, which made it into opera.

There was the sacred calendar. That is, there was the annual chronic, continually annual acts of worship. There was the weekly Sabbaths.

There was the sabbatical year. There were feasts and sacred seasons and so forth. Then in addition to the chronic annual cultus, there was the critical moment when you had war, drought, or plague.

Without elaborating that, that's all in 1 Kings chapter 8, verse 31 through verse 51. And in your notes, I give you the seven different kinds of plagues and so forth. We talked about sacred seasons and the normal cycle.

That could be the normal cycle of the Sabbath, the weekly Sabbath. There was a normal cycle of the festival days, the three festival days, three festival seasons of Passover, Pentecost, and fall with this complex of Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement, New Year, fall festival, soap booths, celebrating booths, and so forth. There was also the year of Jubilee.

All of that was chronic, and regular, but there could be critical moments of famine, drought, earthquake, all of these things. Solomon is anticipating that when people would also go to the temple in their crisis. There's some uncertainty about exactly how the sage fitted into the temple worship.

The sage was more in the city gate. So it's more of a question, how does the wisdom teacher fit into the temple worship? As we saw, there is wisdom material like Psalm 73. How actually did that perform within the temple? I think that the priest would have given this kind of instruction.

He was the teacher in Israel. So, I have no particular problem with thinking of the priest at the temple teaching the people. It seems to me that could well be part of the temple worship.

We now turn to the aspects of the cultus in the Psalter. I begin by contrasting the within the temple and outside of the temple. That within the temple, covenantal benevolences are mediated to the worship, including forgiveness through sacrifice.

Within I say, all is sacred. It's holy. It's set apart.

Without is the profane. Actually, the word profane etymologically means pro, before, fanum, the temple. It means before the temple, outside of the temple, that is the profane.

So within the temple, you have the sacred, outside of the temple, you have the profane. So when you enter into the temple complex, you're entering into a sacred sphere, into the holy sphere of God's presence. Within is eternal.

It is infinite that glory be to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be evermore. In the temple, you're entering into the eternal. You're entering into reality.

You're entering into the presence of God. Without it's finite, it's temporal, it's passing and fading away. Within the temple there is perfection.

Outside of the temple, there is imperfection and sin. Looking at more particularly than in the Psalms, we have the sacred site and we've already read one of those Psalms. So, we have the Psalms of Zion.

And as you read the Psalms, they refer to Zion, the house of the Lord, the holy hill, the sanctuary of God, the dwelling place in Zion. And I give you a list of references that make reference to the temple as a sacred site. Psalms pertaining to some Psalms celebrate the election of Mount Zion.

As God chose the house of David, he chose Mount Zion. In pagan religions, the God is endemically related to a place. He's related to that mountain.

He cannot move. Israel's God is transcendent. He met Israel at Mount Sinai.

And then he elected Mount Zion. It's not that he is endemically, inherently connected with Mount Zion. He chose it.

So, we have the songs of Zion. Here's Psalm 46, God is our refuge and strength and ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way

and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters grow and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her. She will not fall.

God will help her at daybreak of day. Nations are in an uproar, and kingdoms fall. He lifts his voice.

The earth melts. The Almighty, the Lord Almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear.

He burns the shield with fire. He says, be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations.

I will be exalted on earth. The Lord Almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress.

So, you have these Psalms pertaining to the election of Zion. You have other Psalms that speak of participation in the worship of who is qualified to go into the house of the Lord. This would be like Psalm 15.

If you want to take a look, this is Psalm 15 is David's 10 commandments. I'll just read it quickly. All of these could take expansion, but I think there's a point in reading, just it's a Psalm of David.

Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? In David's day, he had built his own tent for the ark before Solomon built the temple. It's one of the evidences for Davidic authorship is that his Psalms speak of a tent that's here. Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent, who may live on your holy hill.

Then he gives three generalizations and three positive statements. The one whose walk is blameless, that is, has integrity with total commitment to God and his worship. It doesn't mean sinless, but it means a wholehearted commitment to God who does what is righteous, serves, depends upon God, serves the community, who speaks the truth from their heart.

In other words, there's no hypocrisy. Then negatively he picks up on that, whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbor and casts no slur on others. There's no gossip and he does no wrong to the neighbor.

So, you have three positives, and three negatives. The seventh and critical one pertains to our relationship with God. That is, you show your relationship with God by those whom you honor and those whom you reject.

Who despises a vile person, but honors those who fear the Lord. So, he shows he fears the Lord by identifying with those. He honors those who fear the Lord, but the crowd of adulterers and crime, he rejects that.

He honors those who worship and are pious and depend upon God. Eighth, he keeps an oath even when it hurts and does not change his mind. In other words, it's the person who keeps their marriage vows, who can enter the hell of God.

It's those who break their vows. Of course, thank God there's atonement. There's the forgiveness of God, but we must appeal that forgiveness and renounce adultery, renounce all forms of taking of life that violate the 10 commandments.

The fifth is made very, very pointed, who lends money to the poor without interest, who does not accept a bribe against the innocent. Whoever does these things will be shaken. So that's a psalm that shows who can participate in the worship at the temple.

That takes me back to where I began that there are covenant structures. You just don't barge into God's presence or assume that you can enter into the infinite reality of God himself, because God is holy. He demands these, which are the expressions, David's expression, ultimately of the 10 commandments.

Do you think by picking 10 that David is trying to make us think of the 10 commandments and he's kind of rewording them or getting at their heart? I think there are 10 because there are 10 commandments. All of these commandments, I don't think he's trying to ape them one-for-one. He does mention keeping your vows to your own heart, but I don't think he says much here about the Sabbath day or so forth.

So, I just think 10 symbolizes fullness. I think that's the point of it. It's fullness and they're very broad generalizations.

But if you keep these 10, David's 10, you will be keeping Moses' 10. If you do what's righteous, which is dependence upon God, you're going to be also keeping the 10 commandments, I would think. The Psalter, having looked at references to the sacred site in the book of Psalms, now we look at references to the sacred seasons.

So, for example, there is a reference to the Sabbath day. Psalm 92 was meant for singing on the Sabbath day. Psalm 81 was recited at the new moon.

Then many of the Psalms were recited at the morning and evening sacrifices. As we'll see, Psalm 3 is a morning prayer. Psalm 4 is an evening prayer.

Psalm 5 is a morning prayer. Psalm 6 is an evening prayer. I think probably those Psalms were recited in connection with the morning sacrifice and with the evening sacrifice.

The Chronicle tells us, then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the Lord to invoke, to give grateful praise, and to praise the Lord, the God of Israel. Asaph was the chief and second to him were Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramot, Jehiel, Mattathiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel who would play harps and lyres. Asaph was the sound, the cymbals.

Benaiah and Jehaziel, the priest, would have blown trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of God. Then on that day, David first appointed that Thanksgiving be sung to the Lord by Asaph and his brothers. But it was to be done regularly before the ark of the Lord.

So, these Psalms were sung, I take it, regularly at these daily sacrifices. So far as sacred actions are concerned, there are references to sacred offerings. I give you the verses that makes reference to it.

So for example, Psalm 96, ascribe to the Lord the glory, do his name, bring an offering, and come into his courts. Psalm 107, let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind. Let them sacrifice, thank offerings, and tell of his works with songs of joy.

Psalm 116, these are songs of grateful praise. What shall I return to the Lord for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all the people.

I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem. So, there were then the sacred offerings.

There were also prophetic oracles that were given at the temple. Psalm 50 would be an example of that. It's a Psalm of Asaph.

He says, the mighty one, God, the Lord speaks and summons the whole earth from the rising of the sun to where it sets. Then in verse 70, he says, listen, my people, and I will speak. I will testify against you, Israel.

I am God, your God. I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before me. But what he faults them for is the failure to keep covenant and ethics.

So Psalm 50 is a prophetic oracle given at the temple against the people. So far as sacred, we've talked about sacred actions. We've talked about the offerings.

We've talked about prophetic oracles. There were also processions that you live in imagination. Here's Psalm 26 and the psalmist says in his protestation of innocence, I wash my hands in innocence and go about your altar, O Lord.

Proclaiming aloud your praise and telling of all your wonderful deeds. Lord, I love the house where you live, the place where your glory dwells. Then in Psalm 68, he describes a procession.

Here's a description of how the tribes are entering. In front are the singers, after them the musicians. With them are the young women playing the timbrels.

Praise God in the great congregation. Praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel. There is a little tribe of Benjamin leading them.

They're the great throng of Judas princes. And they're the princess of Zebulun and of Naphtali. You can almost see the procession as it enters, the tribes enter into their worship.

Again, there are songs of pilgrimage. In fact, Psalms 120 through 134 were sung when Israel made a pilgrimage to the temple. This is Psalm 84.

It's not one of the Ascent Psalms, but it shows a journey, a pilgrimage to the temple, and the experience on the way to the temple. How lovely this is, it belongs to the sons of Korach. I doubt that, I think this means it belongs to their community, maybe composed within their community, but it was performed by the Korahites.

How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty. My soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home and the swallow will nest for herself, where she may have her young. A place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. Of course, the birds built their nests there because there could be no killing at the temple and they were secure there.

That's the picture of as the bird is secure in the temple of the Lord, one has protection and security. Blessed are those who dwell in your house. They are ever praising you.

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the valley of Baca, which means tears, they make it a place of springs. The autumn rains also cover it with pools.

So, their tears are transformed into springs of life. They go from strength to strength until each appears before God in Zion. Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty.

He's now at the temple. Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty. Listen to me, God of Jacob.

And what does he pray for? The King. Look on our shield, O God. Look with favor on your anointed one.

And then he reflects upon the beauty of this pilgrimage. Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

For the Lord God is a sun and a shield. The Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

Lord Almighty, bless the one whose trust is in you. So, you can see this is a pilgrimage psalm and he looks forward to being in the presence of God. And when he gets into the presence of God, he prays for the King that God would look in favor on the King.

Then he realizes there's nothing better on earth than to be in the presence of God and in worship and in prayer. Here's one of the Songs of Ascent, Psalm 122. This is a Psalm of David.

I rejoice with those who said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord. Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together.

There's where the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord to praise the name of the Lord, according to the statute given to Israel. There stand the thrones for judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels. For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, peace be with you.

For the sake of the house of the Lord, our God, I will seek your prosperity. So you could see some of the sacred actions of pilgrimage and offering up of sacrifices, prophetic activity, and so forth. I think you could see why this is worthy of separate

treatment of another approach that we live in the temple because that's where the Psalms were sung.

We understand what's happening through that external expression of religion. I'm hoping that when you read the Psalms and you live in the temple, you'll have a better understanding and appreciation for them. They reference sacred objects.

There's the sacred altar as in Psalm 84. There's the sacred cup. I will offer up the cup of salvation in a Psalm of grateful praise.

They speak about banners. This is when the king is going out to war. They pray for the king in Psalm 20 as he's going out to war, and celebrate his victory upon his return in Psalm 21.

But in Psalm 20, may we shout for joy over your victory and lift up our banners in the name of our God. So, each tribe would have its banner and it would be a sacred banner to the Lord and his victory. May the Lord grant all of your requests as said to the king.

There were musical instruments I use here in Psalm 150. This is the climax of the Psalm and the whole orchestra comes in to praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Praise God in his sanctuary. Praise him in the mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power.

Praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the blast of the ram's horn. Then comes praise him with the harp and lyre.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance. Praise him with strings and pipe. Praise him with the clash of cymbals.

Praise him with resounding cymbals with everything that hath breath. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

There are not only sacred objects and sacred actions and sacred sites and sacred calendar, but there's the sacred personnel. As we commented, the temple was really the expression of heaven. There was no sharp dichotomy between God in heaven and God in the temple.

The temple was a replica of heaven. It was a way of thinking about heaven. We cannot think about God.

We cannot think about heaven apart from metaphor. The metaphor for God, he's likened to, does he who have ears, does he who form the ear not hear? Does he who

form the eye not see? And so we are expressions of God to let us know that God hears our prayer, that he sees us. He sees us and he takes pity upon us and so forth.

These are all, we are theomorphic. We are metaphors for what God is like. And the temple is a metaphor for heaven and Israel itself and the temple king is a metaphor, a picture of Christ and his church on the diachronic level.

But the sacred personnel include the angels. Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obey in the voice of his word. Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers who do his will.

And then there are the priests. Let us go to his dwelling place. Let us go, let us worship at his footstool.

Arise, O Lord, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. Let your priests be clothed with righteousness and let your saints shout for joy. There are the Levites, O house of Levi, bless the Lord.

O house of Aaron, bless the Lord. O house of Levi, bless the Lord. And then it extends beyond the priesthood.

You who fear the Lord, bless the Lord. We'll be looking at the king in Psalm 2, who becomes his holy king. In Psalm 44, we met the army at the temple.

And then we have the God-fearers and they're all part of the sacred personnel. All right, we'll end the introduction to the cultists here. Now we'll look at a particular psalm or two, which deal with the coronation liturgy of the king at the temple.

Three questions. You said the temple was a replica of heaven. And now we ourselves are a, and used a word, feel something.

Oh, yes. I use the word that I'm trying to describe what God is like theomorphic, M-O-R-P-H-I-C, made like God. And so we're the image of God.

And so he gave us eyes that we may know he can see. He gave us ears. So, we know that he can hear.

It's not that God has a corporeal eye or a corporeal ear, but we know he sees and he hears. Secondly, you were talking about how heaven is a replica of heaven. The temple is a replica of heaven.

It allows us to somewhat understand what heaven's like. And I'm thinking in the New Testament about the relationship of marriage and how Paul moves from a discussion

of our relationship with God and the church into marriage or the other way around, I guess. The same kind of thing.

I would have to put it that way. It's another way of showing the marriage is to show the relationship of Christ and his church of how they relate. And really it must speak as Christ, whatever you want to say about headship, whatever Christ is to the church, the husband is to his wife.

And so that therefore the husband dies for the wife and the wife obeys the husband in everything as we obey Christ in everything. It's a doctrine that's been lost. Well, and the whole issue of, you were talking earlier about in architecture and how certain strands of Christianity understand there's a connection between architecture and helping us understand what worship is and what God is.

So, cathedrals are laid out on a cross and these kinds of stuff versus other strands of Christianity where the church building is a square box and it's just ugly. And there's no understanding of the relationship of forms to the reality. Right.

And I think that we impoverish ourselves if we don't use the tactile, visible imagery of what a building can do. I think there is value in putting the pulpit where you read Scripture above the lectern where you preach Scripture so that the lectern is always under Scripture. I think that when you go into a church, it says a lot about its theology, and its architecture.

So, I think if you put a choir in the front and you put a pulpit in the middle, and that's pretty much it. It's just drama. It can turn into entertainment.

You have the choir and they dress up and it's really entertainment. The preacher is the focus and not the Word of God. Whereas others will put the table at the center.

It's the sacrifice of Christ that's at the center. So, I think you can't escape symbolism. Is that what's going on in some traditions where the preacher preaches from the side and not the middle? Yes.

They'll often have the Lord's Supper in the center of it all. And finally, the overall thing that's been striking me as you've been talking is, I know we're all different in how we want to worship and how we respond to God, but there's a lot of formality in what you're describing. In the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament. The Old Testament is pretty well defined. There isn't that much creativity, but in the New Testament, I find it relatively undefined which I think gives you a lot of liberty.

So, one of my first ministries was back in 1955. It was a summer ministry. One of the ministries was with the Saudi Indians in Louisiana.

The pastor who founded the church, gave them almost no instruction. They could just worship as they wanted to worship, provided they kept the Lord's Supper and baptism. Well, when I got there, they had all the women on one side.

I mean, that's what they did naturally. They separated sexually. So, the women were on one side, the men were on the other side.

Now the women were kind of scattered on the left side, but on the right side, the men were concentrated in the back two rows or three rows or in the front two or three rows. So, I said to his name was dear brother, Brother Leeds. I said to Brother Leeds, I understand the women and the men, but what's going on with the men? Well, he said, the men in the back row are either unsaved or out of fellowship.

And when you preach, you preach to the back row.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 20, Sacred Sites, Seasons, Objects, and Personnel.