

Psalm 28

Praying toward the Oracle of God

Psalm 28:1-2 - "Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit. Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle."

"I become like them that go down into the pit" - It's interesting, considering our Torah reading about Jacob, that the word for "pit" is used only six times in the Torah, four of those in relation to Jacob's son Joseph (a type of Christ), who was thrown into a pit by his brothers, and later into a dungeon. (**Genesis 37:22,28-29, and 41:14**)

"Thy holy oracle" is *dēbiyr* - "speaking" but also a technical term for the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle, the innermost chamber; the "oracle" of God, where God resided with Israel in the form of the Shekinah Glory, and from where he would speak to them and give a response to their prayers.

2 Chronicles 5:7 - "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim"

The Septuagint uses the Greek word *hilasterion* as a name for the "mercy seat" that was on top of the ark and was overshadowed by the cherubim, on which the high priest would sprinkle blood once a year, and on which God's presence would 'sit.'

Paul says Jews were entrusted with the "oracles of God" (**Romans 3:2**)

Believers have access through Christ to this intimacy with God at this "throne of grace."

Hebrews 4:15-16 - "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

1 Peter 4:11 - "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (i.e. speak from the point of view of residing with God in the Holy of Holies).

Romans 3:25 - "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (*'kaporeth'* in Hebrew, *hilastērion* in greek - mercy seat, lid of the ark) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"

Christ in type is the mercy seat, and the blood sprinkled on it, and the High Priest who sprinkles, and the sacrifice from whom the blood originates.

At his crucifixion, the veil separating the Holy of Holies was torn, representing the

opening of a “newly slain way” (**Hebrews 10:20**) - Christ himself - into God’s presence for every believer.

“the veil, that is to say, his flesh” - i.e. Christ had to “pass through” the suffering of his own torn flesh, to once and for all perform the sacrifice of atonement for sin.

David’s prayer, and the rest of the psalm, is “toward” this understanding.

Compare the next verse with Jacob’s response (**Genesis 49:5-7**) on his deathbed to his son’s slaughter of the Shechemites:

Psalm 28:3 - “Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbors, but mischief is in their hearts.”

Finally, David rejoices knowing God will save and strengthen him and God’s people.

Psalm 28:8-9 - “The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed (*mashiyach* - David the king, but prophetically The Messiah, the anointed one). Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.”