

Psalms 14 & 15 from the Prime prayer (15 & 16 in the Bible)

1- Objectives

- ❖ Bible Study for Psalms 14 and 15 from the Morning Prayer

2- References

- ❖ Interpretation of the Old Testament by Fr. Tadros Malaty
http://st-takla.org/pub_Bible-Interpretations/Tafseer-Al-Keta-Al-Mokadas-El-3ahd-Al-Adim-02-Abouna-Tadros-Ya3koob.html

3- Scriptural Verse

- ❖ “Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments” (Psalm 119:164)

4- Lesson Guidelines

Psalm 14

- ❖ David the righteous shows us the way to heaven by asking a meaningful question: O Lord, who shall abide in Your dwelling place? And who can rest upon Your holy mountain?
- ❖ He asks because he wants to know the truth and to live his life according to that truth and to teach the Jews who believed that they were the children of God, just because they were the descendents of Abraham; a statement that proved to be wrong and our Lord corrected it by saying that the children of Abraham are those who do the works of Abraham (John 8:39).
- ❖ David the prophet answered his own question because he is a prophet and knows the truth. God said about him: “I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will” (Acts: 8:13).

Who shall abide in the dwelling place of the Lord?

He who walks blamelessly and doing righteousness and speaks the truth in his heart

- ❖ When we obey God’s commandments without complaining or arguing, because the truth of God is in our hearts, not the truth of man; and we fear no one but our beloved God. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:12-15).

He who has not spoken deceitfully with his tongue neither has done evil to his friend, nor taking up a reproach against his neighbors

- ❖ To live with God, we must be transparent and simple in mind, heart, and speech, not hiding something and not pretending to be something we are not. With our friends, we should not backstab one another even if we are under stress and the opportunity presents itself. With our neighbors, we should not blame others for our failure, we should not curse other’s behaviors and weaknesses, in the contrary, we should forgive and let go any offenses against us.

The evil worker is disdained before him, but he glorifies those who fear the Lord. He gives oath to his friend and does not turn away from him.

- ❖ To live with God, we must hate what He hates; we should not honor those that practice evil (even if they are celebrities or influential people), instead God asks us to glorify those that fear the Lord and do His

works, not to be ashamed to be associated with the righteous even though they might be unpopular. We should promise to help others when they are in need, and not go back on our word “You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord” (Matthew 5:33).

He who has not given his money on usury, and has not received bribes against the godly

- ❖ We should not base our friendships on giving vs. taking, sometimes we lend with expecting in return and we get angry if not repaid. Be merciful to the needy and don't take advantages of their need: “When you lend your brother anything... And if the man is poor, you shall not keep his pledge overnight. You shall in any case return the pledge to him again when the sun goes down, that he may sleep in his own garment and bless you; and it shall be righteousness to you before the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 24:10-13).
- ❖ We should not accuse the innocent for personal gain “Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person” (Deuteronomy 27:25).

Psalm 15

Hope of the faithful and the Victory of the Lord Jesus Christ over death

Keep me, O Lord; for I have hoped in You

- ❖ David is supplicating God, in Whom he put his trust, to keep him, and it is also a prophecy about the Lord Jesus Christ supplicating the Father before enduring crucifixion. He speaks as a man about to endure severe hardship that goes far beyond physical pain.

I said to the Lord, “You are my Lord, and You have no need of my goodness.”

- ❖ David said to the Lord: “and yet You created me, but You have no need of me, I add nothing to You”. Parents might want to have kids to fill a longing or need they have, but God has no need. He created us just to give to us as we have nothing to offer Him. He created us for sacrificial love, since that is His nature.

He has manifested His wonders to His saints, and He has delight in them

- ❖ His saints are His chosen people who are dedicated to Him; through them He declares His holiness and glory to the world. They live in the same earth like the evil ones, but they distinguish His work in everything when He turns miraculously the evil into good for them. He granted them His life and His resurrection because He delighted in them “No longer do I call you servants, ... but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15).

Their ailments have been multiplied who hastened after another God. I will not assemble their meetings of blood, nor make mention of their names with my lips

- ❖ Those that reject the idea that God made it all, and go after another god, like atheists who worship the world multiplies their ailments and got depression, hatred, fear, lack of direction, disease, etc.
- ❖ God permit their suffering to direct them to the right path; their ailments are multiplied not to destroy them but to lead them to repentance (St. Augustine).
- ❖ We should not associate with these types of influences or even speak about these people nor share in their sacrifices to keep ourselves holy and not defiled by their ways.
- ❖ St. Cyril sees that this prophecy has been fulfilled when the gentiles accepted the faith.

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup. You are He who brings my inheritance back to me. The measuring lines have fallen to me among the best, and my inheritance is confirmed for me.

- ❖ King David was the rightful king, but he was not able to take his throne (inheritance). He trusted that God would bring him what is rightfully his. Even though he is on the run, and has been living in caves, and not given his right as king, he knows that he is in the hands of God and that God will provide for him all that he needs. His inheritance is sure because God has promised it to him and he saw it of the best portions.
- ❖ The cup is the cup of feast in the Jewish celebration from which everyone has his share and it is a token for the grace of God.
- ❖ The measuring lines are the lines of inheritance given to the people of Israel, except the Levi, by casting lots “But the Levites has no part among you, for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance” (Joshua18:7); although David was not from the Levi, still he felt that the Lord is his portion and that’s enough for him.

I will bless the Lord who has given me understanding; my reins too have instructed me even till the night. I foresaw the Lord always before me; He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved

- ❖ Above all things we should thank God for giving us knowledge of Himself, and for giving us a spirit of wisdom to instruct us “Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said: I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes” (Luke 10:21).
- ❖ “Even till the night” God instructs us and illuminates us even in our dark times and in times of temptation. These are the hardest times for us to see God. As kidneys clear the blood, repentance cleans the soul.
- ❖ King David sees the Lord before him at all times even in his tribulations as the Lord Jesus Christ also sees His mission before Him at all times, He embraced the cross and walked by His own will to Golgotha. The knowledge of the presence of God makes us immovable, unshaken, and at peace regardless of our circumstances.

Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue exulted; moreover also my flesh shall live in hope: because You shall not leave my soul in Hades, neither shall You suffer Your holy One to see corruption

- ❖ This should be a cause of hope...that no matter how difficult life gets, God is still there, and our destination is still heaven. Like our Lord who rejoiced because, despite the pain He experienced, He was accomplishing salvation for His beloved children for whom He came to die.
- ❖ Not only did He resurrect, but gave us the same hope of resurrection. If the Lord Jesus Christ could overcome death quite literally, how much more does He offer us a hope of our own spiritual resurrection? Any suffering I go through for a time is for purification to draw me closer to Him.
- ❖ God has not abandoned us as it seems, but is ready to demonstrate His true power. He often makes us feel the extent of our weakness before manifesting the fullness of His strength. Then we know without doubt that it was Him who worked (Gideon, Red Sea Crossing, etc)

You have made known to me the ways of life; You will fill me with joy with Your face: delight is in Your right hand forever

- ❖ As the previous verses talked about Resurrection, this one talks about Ascension where we will see the Lord and enjoy eternally at His right hand and so all sorrow and tribulations for the church are the cause of its eternal Glory.

5- Discussion Points

- ❖ The Psalms of David are considered prayers for himself, prophecies about the Lord and a model prayer for us; that is why praying with the psalms is very much advised. The more we pray with the psalm, the more we know how to pray.

6- Conclusion

- ❖ Psalm 14: He, who does the will of God and is blameless before Him, shall not stumble and will enjoy His peace and will not be shaken forever.
- ❖ Psalm 15: God reveals His secret to His saints, grants them wisdom and knowledge to do His will to enjoy eternally with Him.

7- Activities / Workshop

- ❖ Workshop to study the psalms in groups