



## PSALM 75

Words for the Godly; Warning for the Wicked

This is Holly with Presence Point and welcome to our *Psalms for Shepherds* series. Today we're in *Psalm 75*, ten verses that one commentator calls a 'digest' of a worship service summoned to thank the Lord for what He had done for His people.

It begins with an invocation of praise, moves to a message directly from God in His words, and then to a reminder from the psalmist of application. The author closes the psalm with a benediction of praise and another reminder that God is in control and that He will judge the wicked and increase the power of the godly in His time.

### *Psalm 75*

We give thanks to you, O God;  
we give thanks, for your name is near.

We recount your wondrous deeds.

<sup>2</sup> [and then the psalmist quotes God as saying] "At the set time that I appoint  
I will judge with equity.

<sup>3</sup> When the earth totters, and all its inhabitants,  
it is I who keep steady its pillars.

<sup>4</sup> I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast,'  
and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your horn;

<sup>5</sup> do not lift up your horn on high,  
or speak with haughty neck."

<sup>6</sup> [and then the psalmist writes] "For not from the east or from the west  
and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,

<sup>7</sup> but it is God who executes judgment,  
putting down one and lifting up another.

<sup>8</sup> For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup  
with foaming wine, well mixed,  
and he pours out from it,  
and all the wicked of the earth  
shall drain it down to the dregs.

<sup>9</sup> But I will declare it forever;

I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

<sup>10</sup> All the horns of the wicked I will cut off,  
but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up.

About worship, Warren Wiersbe reminds us that, "Though God wants us to bring our burdens to Him and seek His help, worship begins with getting our eyes of faith off the circumstances of life and focusing them on the Lord God Almighty, His glorious attributes and his wonderful works." Wiersbe goes on to remind us that, "If we expect the Lord to receive our words of praise, we must pay attention to His Word of truth as it is read, sung, and preached." Whoa, that's a powerful reminder that is!

In this psalm, verses 2 through 5 quote God's Word of encouragement for His followers and His words of warning for the godless. For the righteous, His reminder is that His timing is perfect. He is never late, but He is also never early. Reading this psalm and this verse, I couldn't help but be reminded of a beautiful crystal clock that sits on my desk. The gold-plated inscription reads, "God's timing is perfect." A dear mentor in Christ gifted that clock to me over 22 years ago as a reminder of how, in a specific circumstance in my life, God had shown up right on time. I cannot tell you how many times that reminder has comforted my soul and how often it's proven true!

Along with God's words for the godly, He also includes a warning for the wicked. You heard it in verses 4 and 5. "I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast,' and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your horn; do not lift up your horn on high, or speak with haughty neck.'" This clearly is a warning against arrogance, but also against disobedience to the Father's will and way. We know that whenever a term is repeated in a passage multiple times, it should get our attention. As you probably noticed, in this psalm, there are multiple references to "horns" and to "lift up." It's fascinating how the warning against pride ties closely to both of these terms.

First, with regards to "horns," it's interesting to note that before a horned beast lowers its head and attacks, it proudly lifts its head high to challenge its opponent. That action is signaling from one animal to the other that the challenger is ready for a confrontation. These animals hold their heads high displaying their horns in a prideful challenge and then lower their head to attack. Regarding the term "lift up," in this chapter, it is associated with arrogance that leads to trouble, as a "stiff neck" and proud speech are marks of an insolent and rebellious person, not one who is bowed down in submission to the Lord. We probably know those people and, from time to time, have been those stiff-necked people.

We know that throughout Scripture God clearly takes arrogance toward others and Himself very seriously. In fact, this passage has another reminder for me and that is of my dear friends at the Lead Like Jesus organization who teach that E G O in our lives can easily stand for E d g i n g o d o u t. However if we choose to replace pride with humility and fear with confidence in the Father, our

Audience of One, we can change those Edging God Out actions to behaviors that, instead, Exalt God Only.

As this summary of worship continues, the psalmist reminds us that it is not from anywhere or anyone on this earth that being lifted up comes, but that it is God alone who executes judgment, "putting one down and lifting another up." It is at His hand that men are made great and given power. The psalmist does not hesitate either to remind the worshippers that the believers could go home from the worship service trusting the Lord to deliver them and judge their enemies rather than doing the judging themselves but that the ungodly should be concerned about future judgment and drinking a cup of wine mixed with strong spices, which indicates judgment. If you're a follower of Jesus, you can be grateful with me that Matthew, in his gospel, reminds us of how our Lord Jesus drank that cup of judgment cup for us.

This psalmist reminds us that those who refuse to trust in God will drink the cup of judgment to the very dregs. In other words, all the way down to the sediment. Fellow shepherd leader, may we do as this psalmist has done: recognize the importance of humble submission to the Father, the power that arrogance and pride has to destroy us, our testimony, and the lives of the sheep we impact, and declare forever to sing the praises of the God of Jacob, living for Him, serving and sacrificing for those we lead and influence, and bringing those we impact closer to Jesus. Thanks so much for listening this week. Please live deeply into your calling.