



BIBLE STUDY for the FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY



Focus text: Psalm 29

Additional texts: Isaiah 43: 1 - 7; Acts 8: 14 - 17; Luke 3: 15 - 17, 21 - 22

The focus of the Season of Epiphany is the manifestation of God's glory 'displayed in the face of Christ', and that we, 'who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit' (2 Cor 4:6; 5:18). Not only is this revealed *to* us, but also *through* us.

The psalm calls for worship from the heavens and the earth, from the whole of God's creation. Over the mighty waters God's voice is heard, and God's glory is displayed. The Creator God is powerful, majestic, awesome and enthroned over the flood, 'enthroned as King forever.' If the flood represents nature in its destructive power, we are reminded that God is not only in control but that:

'The LORD gives strength to His people;
The LORD blesses His people with peace'.

Whatever the current world situation may be, worship is always an appropriate response from God's people:

'Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name;
Worship the LORD in the splendour of His holiness'.

The close connection between the psalm and the Genesis passage is clearly intended to draw the parallels that are contained in both passages.

- There was water over which God had control;
- It was the "Voice of God" that initiated God's work;
- It was God's action that brought creation into being at every step of the way.

The final verses of the psalm remind us that this God is Creator and is the One who is "enthroned as king forever".

In addition, there is an expectation that God will provide strength for the people in the generations to come.

(From Word and Worship)

As you contemplate the readings and specifically the focus text, think about how you worship the Lord in your day to day life.

Do you worship daily with your words, through prayer and praise?

Do you worship with your actions, by showing your love for God, through loving others?

Let us pray

*God of grace and glory,
you call us with your voice of flame
to be your people, faithful and courageous.*

*As your beloved Son
embraced his mission in the waters of baptism,
inspire us with the fire of your Spirit
to join in his transforming work.*

*We ask this in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.*

Amen

