

Sunday Night Message

March 8, 2015

*Psalm 85* –

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 85

## **Introduction**

“A psalm for the sons of Korah”

Korah:

The Levites were divided into three families: Gershon, Kohath, and Mereri; and these families were placed in charge of the Tabernacle and later, the Temple:

*"And these are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi were an hundred thirty and seven years." (Exodus 6:16)*

Korah descended from the Kohathites (Exodus 6:18 & 21)

Aaron also descended from the Kohathites (6:18 & 21)

The duties of the Levites – Numbers 3:14 – 37

Korah was the one who led a rebellion against Moses, and was actually put to death by God in Numbers 16:1 - 35. His sons were not put to death, however, and were made worship leaders in the tabernacle. (1 Chronicles 9:19; 26:1 – 19; Psalms 42; 44 – 49 are all psalms for the sons of Korah as well as 85; 87 - 88).

The context of this psalm is believed by some to surround the time period after the Israelites return from their captivity in Babylon and Persia. Others believe that these psalms of Kohath were written somewhere around the time of David, but any references to the captivity, etc. are prophetic. In other words, because God is timeless, His word is also timeless, and doesn't need to be written from the perspective of history.

## **I A Past Mercy Remembered (vs. 1 – 3)**

The psalmist or song leader here is remembering and worshipping God for a past deliverance. Very possibly, it is a reference to the return of a remnant of

the people who were taken into captivity into Babylon. It is probably not talking about God's deliverance from Egypt, because this passage seems to point out that the captivity was caused by the people's sin, which was not the case with Israel in Egypt. Whether the psalmist was speaking from the vantage point of history or prophecy is unclear.

### Explain the Babylonian Captivity

Thank God for the forgiveness and restoration that God gives to His people. When we get away from God and refuse to return after repeated warnings, God will be forced to chastise His children; but, He will also forgive and restore them when they finally see the error of their way, and turn back to Him.

There are many today that can testify of God's mercy, forgiveness, and restoration from a past sin, or from a past sinful direction.

## **II A Prayer Made for Revival (vs. 4 - 7)**

The word "salvation" is used often in this psalm, but is not used in association with an individual's salvation from the penalty of sin. Salvation here is dealing with God's deliverance for the nation. The nation was delivered in the past from a captivity, and the psalmist was now asking for salvation, or deliverance, from a present judgment.

It is curious as to why there was a reference to a past deliverance in the same context with a request for a present deliverance. It could be that the psalmist was thanking the Lord for what He had done for them corporately as a nation, and was now speaking on behalf of some of the individuals in the congregation who had yet to get right with God.

The prayer request is simple:

1 Turn us

This is a reference to repentance. Repentance is a change of the mind and attitude that leads to a change of direction. We need to repent in order to be saved.

*"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5)*

*"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)*

*"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" (Acts 3:19)*

*"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:" (Acts 17:30)*

Saved people need to confess and repent of their sin, in order to be restored in their fellowship with God.

*"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)*

## 2 Revive us

Revival is a renewal of spiritual life in the heart of the believer, and it cannot come without repentance.

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)*

## 3 Shew us

If we are willing to repent, and we allow God to fill us with His Spirit then He will shew us His mercy. He will direct our lives according to His perfect will.

### **III A Principle Message is Repeated (vs. 8 - 13)**

God will forgive and restore and bless those who fear Him.

*"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." (James 4:7-10)*