

Message Title: **“Invitation to True Happiness”**

Good morning, every one! The world is presently in chaotic situation. The war between Russia and Ukraine is actively going on more than a year, and the ceasing of the war looks gloomy at the present moment. And the corona pandemic has spread in Japan as well as in the countries around the world, and in these three years hundreds and thousands of precious lives of the people have been lost. And just recently, the spy balloon which seems to be launched by China was shot down by US Air fighter plane in US eastern coast. And the gloomy mood has spread in the two super powers of the world.

We live in these global situations which are so dangerous and dark. Can we say with confidence that whatever may happen we are all right? When we ask ourselves this question, do you have your own reliable final answers?

Today’s Bible passage looks similar to the passage which I used in the message delivered here last time (Nov.26, 2022). The passage I used then was from the Gospel of Matthew 5:1~12, which was the opening section of the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus Christ (Matt. 5~7 chapters). Today’s passage and this section of the sermon on the Mount of Jesus have similar theme, i.e. happiness of man.

Ps. 1 and Ps. 2 , both without author’s name and heading seem to have the theme of happiness of man. The psalmist begins his psalm with **“Blessed is the man”**(NIV) in Psalm 1, and closes this duplex psalms with **“Blessed are all**(NIV)” in Psalm 2, v.12. Here in these psalms, the man’s happy blessed life is plainly expounded and the amazing message that Jesus Christ Himself makes it possible for those who trust in Him. And **“Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling, kiss the Son,”**(Ps.2, vs. 11,12) are recommended by the psalmist. Truly **“all who take refuge in him”**(Ps.2 v.12) are the ones who are blessed by God and can obtain true happiness. And this happy man is like **“a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither, and whatever he does prospers”**(Ps.1,v.3)

Psalms 1 and 2 are necessary to be read with this statement of Jesus Christ which is recorded in the book of Matthew, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near”**(Matt. 4:17). This is the central declaration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These psalms contain the message that any man without leading his life according to the will of the Creator God, he cannot enjoy true happy and blessed life.

Today’s Passage makes it clear that true happiness of man cannot be tasted without one’s faithful walk with the teaching of the Lord God, and accepting Christ whom the Lord God has sent and given to the human being, and living a life with fear and trust in this King of ours, Jesus Christ. Let’s trace the core message of each psalm 1 and 2.

I True happiness of a man resides in the life of obeying the teachings of our Lord God(Ps.1)

The beginning word of the famous teaching of the Sermon of the Mount by Jesus Christ, and the beginning word of Psalms 1 and 2 is the same, namely, “blessed”.

This word in Hebrew is “ashuree”, and it is used twice in Psalms 1 and 2 in the beginning and at the end. It’s equivalence in Greek is “makarioi” and it appears 9 times in Matthew 5:3~11, at the beginning of each verse.

“ashuree” in Hebrew has its verb root, “aashar” meaning “to walk straight, advance”. When this word is applied to a human being, it can mean “the walk of a man which is straight and accepted by God.” Of course, this kind of walk of a man is sincere and true walk and it is blessed by God. The psalmist is tacitly claiming it.

This “ashuree” is used in the Old testament many times. Among those, the psalmist spoke just like Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, thus:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.(Ps.1 v.1)

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.(Ps.1 v.12)

Also in Ps.32 v.1,2:

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered,

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

II True happiness of a man can be obtained only through the life of believing and trusting in Jesus Christ who was sent by His Father God (Ps. 2)

In Psalm 1, two kinds of people and their ways of life are introduced. Namely, “**the counsel of the wicked**”, “**the way of sinners**”, “**the seat of mockers**”, “**the wicked**” (vs. 1, 4, 5, 6) and “**the assembly of the righteous**”, “**the way of the righteous**”(vs. 5,6) . And it is exhorted that we should choose to become the latter. Any man or woman whosoever he or she is, belongs either one of the two. Is there any way that we should choose the righteous side and experience the happy life?

Ps. 2 clearly describes that the wicked and the sinners become the enemy of the Lord and His Anointed One(Ps.2 vs.1~3) , and reject the One who is His Son and resist the King who is the Judge of the world, will go to the way of perish(vs.9~12a). But those who accept this One and walk with Him, will receive the good things of this world and have a happy life(vs.8,9).

“**Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling, kiss the Son**”(vs.11,12) suggests clearly that there is a way of life trusting the Lord, Jesus Christ, and obeying Him all the time.

Later, when Jesus Christ came to the world, some New Testament writers testified that Ps. 2 in Old Testament prophesied the coming of Jesus Christ. In the book of Acts, the apostle of Paul openly testify in Antioch, Pisidia saying:

“We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their

children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”(Acts 13:32,33)

Also in the book of Hebrew in New Testament says this:

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father’? Or again , ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son’”(Hebrew 1 vs.1~5)

Psalm 2 clearly prophesied Jesus Christ who is to come!

Conclusive Word

This Jesus is the One who is to come, Christ!

Only those who live his life according to what he has taught us will be led into the life of Ashuree “blessed, happy” life. This is the only way no other way! As Jesus Himself invites us through His Apostle, John, saying:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”(John 3:16)