



THE EXHORTER

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. (prchurchofchrist.org)

June 26, 2011

JUMP START # 235

Psalm 136:5—“To him who made the Heavens with skill, for his loving-kindness is everlasting.”

This chapter of Psalms is found in a section that is commonly called the “Praise Psalms.” The emphasis is praising God. That is profound and easy to notice in this chapter.

The first verses begin with the expression, “Give thanks to the Lord.” Verses one through three begin this way. After that, the phrase, “to him” begins several of the remaining verses. But what really stands out in this chapter is the last phrase of each verse. It is the same throughout this chapter. After making a statement about God, the verse ends, “For his loving-kindness is everlasting.” It is thought that this chapter would have been read aloud in the temple. The reader would state the first of the verse and the audience would reply with, “for his loving-kindness is everlasting.” There is definitely a rhythm and cadence expressed throughout this chapter.

What caught my eye in our verse today is, “To him who made the Heavens with skill.” Creation is expressed over and over in the scriptures. The Bible begins with that powerful statement, “In the beginning God created...” The word “created” means out of nothing. The book of Hebrews says, the things visible were made by the invisible. (Heb. 11:3)

Some feel that the Bible and science are at war. They are not. Science is a field of study. It studies what is. What is at war is atheistic evolution and the Bible. They both can’t exist. Evolution claims that things came about naturally, through time and chance. The Bible says God created. He was the force, the designer and the power behind creation. They are opposites. If evolution is true, then the Bible is false. If the Bible is true, evolution is false. I stand with God and his word. Our verse today makes three claims that flies in the face of evolution. First, the Heavens were made. Evolution would say it came about through a natural process. Second, that God made the Heavens. Evolution has no room for God. And thirdly, God made them with skill.

Our verse says that God made the Heavens WITH SKILL. I like that. That implies planning, thinking and effort. Have you seen people do things who are skilled? A musician can sit down at a piano and in a moment start playing a wonderful and complicated piece. It’s amazing. A wood carver can take a plain piece of wood and in a few minutes shape an incredible image. It’s amazing. Our God made the Heavens with skill. This is a fascinating principle for me. Evolution doesn’t have a higher being behind things. It has no skill, things just happen. It’s just lucky, I guess, that our feet are not where our ears are. The evolutionist can’t explain that. God can. He decided we’d walk on our feet. It was done with skill.

Skill implies design, purpose and talent. Skill is a reflection of the artist who made the creation. Scholars can look at a painting and tell who the artist was. His style and his skill are seen in his work. Creation is a reflection of God. The world has an order, beauty, purpose and connection to it. The world is God's canvas. The creation, including mankind, was not just thrown together without any thought or reason. It, we, are made with skill by God. Earlier in Psalms we find, "The Heavens declare the handiwork of God (v19).

Now this leads us to a few observations:

First- we are not junk. We are the skilled product of God. We are of value and importance to God. We have talent, usefulness and ability. That's the way God made us. We are worth saving and that's why God sent Jesus. God doesn't make junk!

Secondly- we are a reflection of our creator. You can look at kids and see their parents in them. God wants us to be holy as He is holy. We are to be a chip off the ole' block, as it is said. We are to be in character what God is.

Thirdly- God put effort into his work. The Heavens were made with skill. Shouldn't we be putting skill and effort into his work? Shouldn't we put thought, planning and effort into growing the kingdom of God, sharing his word and being his people on earth? We put a lot of effort into getting a degree, or a career, or a retirement. But sometimes we don't give much thought to the things of God. We should.

You are not just a number...you are not one of the masses, like a snow flake each one of us are unique in personality, ability, looks, talent and opportunity. God made you just that way!

Roger Shouse

Some additional thoughts:

Monday- Gen. 1:27

Tuesday- Psalm 102:18

Wednesday- Isa. 45:12

Thursday- Eph. 2:10

Friday- Col. 1:16

Saturday- Rev. 4:11