Bible Gateway Psalm 50 :: NASB. *Psalm 50* contains an almost awesome blending of promise and warning. From the very beginning, it is obvious that this psalm is different in many ways from some of the other psalms.

## *What does Psalm 50:1 mean?*

The psalm begins very forcefully,

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"The Mighty One, God, the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets".
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There is no sense of building up to a theme. Instead, from the very beginning is seen the power and authority of the Lord God. In addition, much of the psalm is God speaking to His people. The tone is almost like the writings of Isaiah or Jeremiah.

The reason for the tone becomes apparent very quickly in the psalm, but there is also another thought that is seen in the second verse,

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> *"From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth."*

Christians believe that all love comes from God, and many passages point to that fact. However, another great blessing from God, that is often not considered, is that all beauty comes from Him as well. God has given mankind the ability to appreciate the beauty of His creation, and He has given us the ability to appreciate the creativeness of other. Stop and look at the design and beauty found in a simple weed!

Of course, WHAT is beautiful varies from person to person, but the blessing is given to all men and women. God's love is seen in His gift of beauty. All things could have been created without any thought of beauty and this universe could have been a very drab place. One of Satan's weapons that he uses so effectively is to make people think that life and the world ugly.

People, who are hurting spiritually, often have a hard time seeing the beauty that God has given them. Yes, God is perfect in beauty, and what great prayers of thanksgiving should be lifted up to Him for the gift of beauty that has been shared with all humanity!

The first six verses of the psalm describe the Glory of God, and in verse seven, God begins to speak to His people. In the first part, He addresses those who are faithful to Him. “I will not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings which are forever before me.” After verse 8, God teaches the Nation of Israel, and Christians today, a very important lesson about sacrifices and works of service for the Lord.

The lesson is that God does not need sacrifices for Himself. Too often, people believe that they can bargain with God, “If I do this and that, God will HAVE TO save me or help me.” Psalm 50 clearly shows that all such attitudes are dangerously false. In verses 9 and 12, God said, “I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens…If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.”

Today, Christians are expected to be actively involved in doing the Lord’s will. This includes growing as a Christian, living as a Christian, and in spreading the Good News to those that are lost. The true purpose for such activities is seen in Psalm 50. The work of a Christian is done willingly, because it honors God. Everything that a Christian does is done for the glory of God.

For the Jews of the Old Testament period, they honored God by faithfully following the letter and spirit of the Law. For Christians, following the example of Jesus Christ, and letting Him live within each Child of God is the sacrifice that is expected. To the faithful God said, “Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and

you will honor me.”

Beginning in verse 16, the emphasis of the psalm shifts to those that are not faithful to God. In verses 16-20, the Psalmist wrote, “But to the wicked God says, “What right have you to tell of My statutes And to take My covenant in your mouth? For you hate discipline, and you cast My words behind you. When you see a thief, you are pleased with him, and you associate with adulterers. You let your mouth loose in evil and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against your brother; You slander your own mother’s son.”

Again, the message is very clear for the wicked. Faith and love for God is more than “lip-service”. It must also have works that reflect that love. Too often, people begin to believe that works are done to earn salvation or to “make sure” that salvation is not lost. However, such thoughts miss the entire point. If people love God, then they will want to show that love. Love is reflected in the life style that is lived!

There will be the real desire to HONOR God because that love is so strong. If a person says that he loves the Lord yet never attempts to live a life guided by God, then where is the love?

Jesus commanded all of His followers to go into the world. The actions of a faithful Christian ARE beautiful sacrifices to the Lord,

because they are a reflection of the love that must be there. There is no room in the kingdom for spectators. Verses 22-23,

> “Now consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you in pieces, and there will be none to deliver. He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.”

That message was clear in the Old Testament, and it is clear today.