

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## How Oprah Reads The Psalms

(Jerry Fite)

David, by inspiration of God writes, *“There is none like unto Thee among the gods, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto Thy works. All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and they shall glorify Thy name. For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things; Thou art God alone. Teach me Thy way, O Jehovah; I will walk in Thy truth: unite my heart to fear Thy name. I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart; and I will glorify Thy name for evermore. For great is Thy loving-kindness toward me; and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest Sheol”* (Psalm 86:8-13).

David magnifies God in these verses. Three personal names for “God” are used. “Thou art God (Elohiym)- emphasizing His glory; “There is none like unto Thee among the gods, O Lord (Adonay)- emphasizing His exalted position; and “Teach me Thy way, O Jehovah (YHWH) – the self-existing One. He “alone” is God, therefore the worshipful David desires Jehovah to “unite my heart to fear Thy name.” While David exalts God for His lovingkindness and deliverance from Sheol (death), David is

clearly glorifying the person of God, not merely lovingkindness.

Contrast David’s exaltation of God with how Oprah reads Psalm 37:4 – *“Delight thyself also in the Lord (YHWH); and He will give thee the desires of thy heart.”* Oprah quickly moves from the person of God to exalting virtuous attributes by saying, *“Now what that says to me, Lord has a wide range. What is Lord? Compassion, love, forgiveness, kindness. So you delight yourself in these virtues, where the character of the Lord is revealed. Delight thyself in goodness, delight thyself in love, kindness and compassion, and you will receive the desires of your heart. It says to me, if you focus on being a force for good, good things will come.”*

David, by inspiration of God, delights in *“the Lord”* Oprah’s take is *“delight yourself in these virtues”* What virtues are revealed in Psalm 37:4? One is to delight in the Lord Himself, not virtues. One is to delight in the Lord who will give the desires of one who is willing in faith to commit his or her way unto Jehovah (Psalm 37:5).

Disregarding what the author is intentionally saying to the

reader, Oprah directs us to delight in the virtues she has inserted in the text. But this is just her first step in pointing out what the Psalm says to her.

Her next step is generalizing the application of the text: If you are being a force for good, then good things will come. She cannot even bring herself to say the Lord will bring it to pass or make it happen, as the text clearly reveals in context. No, Oprah leaves the person of God behind and picks up a principle: *“focus on being a force for good, then good will come.”*

Oprah says, *“that is the same as 1) the third law of motion, 2) karma, 3) the golden rule.”* She connects science (Newton’s law), eastern religions (Karma) and Christianity (Jesus’ golden Rule) into the same message. Removing the specificity of the one God, a clear principle emerges from her eisegesis, uniting all religions and science around the same basic message: for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction -think good and do good, then good will come. God is reduced to virtuous feelings and kind deeds. They become the force that moves the world, Not the God in Heaven!