

1-1-1999

Editors' Notes

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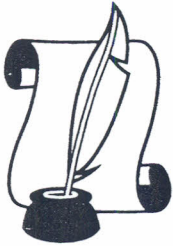


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Recommended Citation

Love, Stuart and Love, D'Esta (1999) "Editors' Notes," *Leaven*: Vol. 7: Iss. 3, Article 2.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/leaven/vol7/iss3/2>

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Editors' Notes

Stuart and D'Esta Love

“I Lift Up My Soul”

Hear, O LORD, and answer me,
 for I am poor and needy.
 Guard my life, for I am devoted to you.
 You are my God; save your servant
 who trusts in you.
 Have mercy on me, O Lord,
 for I call to you all day long.
 Bring joy to your servant,
 for to you, O Lord,
 I lift up my soul.

—Psalm 86:1–4

The above portion of Psalm 86, an individual lament, was the theme scripture for the 56th Annual Pepperdine University Bible Lectures, April 27–30, 1999. Paul Watson, a member of *Leaven's* editorial board, provided the organizational rationale for the lecture series. The words of this scripture express a variety of themes found over and over in the psalms that cast light as to why the Psalter has brought pastoral care to God's people through the centuries. The personal concern of an individual worshiper is rendered to the God of salvation—“Guard my life, for I am devoted to you.” The worshiper is God's servant “who trusts”—who places his whole confidence in the grace and compassionate goodness of God. The petitioner knows all too well what she/he needs—the Lord's mercy to bring joy to her/his soul. So without reservation and with unabashed confidence, the supplicant declares, “For to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.”

Your editors were at first hesitant to devote another issue of *Leaven* to the psalms so soon after our earlier effort, in 1996. However, we noted that every copy of that issue was gone, probably indicating something of the hunger for this topic and the satisfaction supplied by study of the psalms. Also, we were eager to maintain our commitment to using the Pepperdine Bible Lectures as the basis for one of our issues each year. So it is that we revisit a rich deposit of spiritual sustenance—the psalms. Let us introduce the issue with the authors and articles of those who participated in the *Leaven* Symposium. CAROL SHOUN explores the musical dimension of the psalms, reminding us that “song possesses a power beyond that of language.” Shoun states it well: “The psalms, experienced as songs, can harmonize the expressions of mind and heart, strengthen the bonds of community, and provide a glimpse of

the divine perspective of time.” **PRENTICE A. MEADOR** examines the praise psalms for preaching and finds that the psalms “never wear thin” because they “have an elevated sense of worship—God is center stage!” **CHARME ROBARTS** explores the theme of intimacy, observing that in the psalms “we find honest expression of the two poles of human reality: gladness and sorrow.” **C. ROBERT WETZEL** provides a wonderful apologetic reflection of Psalm 139. Wetzel writes, “I would like to suggest that as an expression of praise, Psalm 139 might have an apologetic function for both unbeliever and believer.”

Beyond the Symposium, two of the theme speeches are included: “Out of the Depths” by **RICK MARRS** and “Have Mercy on Me, O God” (Psalm 51) by **MARK LOVE**. Marrs’ article explores the pastoral use of the psalms. Love’s piece takes us to the inner meaning of one of the penitential psalms, that is, what a prayer for pardon, confession of sin, restoration, and renewed sacrifice of a humble heart can signify. We also include material from the class taught by **JOHN WILLIS** and **TIM WILLIS**, who explore the sovereignty of God over all things in Psalm 46. It is primarily because of God’s sovereignty that the speakers of the psalm have confidence that God is “with us”: “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (46:10 NIV). Finally, **PAUL WATSON** provides a resource reading guide—a useful and necessary help for further study. Beyond articles on the psalms, there is a Communion meditation by **LEE MAGNESS**, our usual “corner” for book reviews, and a thanksgiving meditation by **JOHN RICHTER**.

Speaking of book reviews, we apologize to **MORRIS YATES**, **CHARLES GRESHAM**, and our readers for mistakes made in our last issue, *Adult Nurture in the Church*. The name of Yates, one of our reviewers, was inadvertently omitted from the table of contents. Gresham’s review, listed in the contents but omitted from the issue, appears in this issue.

We close with an announcement: the editorial board at its last meeting, May 1999, decided to increase subscription rates beginning in the year 2000. Individual subscriptions will be \$20.00, and other rates will be increased proportionately. We believe that *Leaven* is still a bargain. Our commitment is to increase the quality of each issue and to further our unity among churches of the Stone-Campbell Restoration heritage. This necessitates that the journal become more self-sufficient with the passage of time.

Our final issue for 1999 is entitled *Restoration Themes* and is edited by **HENRY WEBB**. We open the year 2000 with *Teaching and Preaching the Book of Revelation*, edited by **DAVID MATSON**. Other issues for the year 2000 include *Preaching the Bible’s Wisdom Materials*, edited by **DAVID FLEER**; *Theology and Ministry*, edited by **RON HIGHFIELD**; and *Romans and Ministry*, based on the 2000 Pepperdine Bible Lectures, edited by **D’ESTA LOVE** and **STUART LOVE**.

Continue to pray for the progress of *Leaven*. Remember, a subscription to *Leaven* makes a great gift. Why not take advantage of the “first timer” rate of \$10.00 for the remainder of 1999?

D’ESTA AND STUART LOVE