

Offering Praise Unto God

October 17, 2003

Psalm 150

1 PRAISE the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty expanse. 2 Praise Him for His mighty deeds; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. 3 Praise Him with trumpet sound; Praise Him with harp and lyre. 4 Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with resounding cymbals. 6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

This concluding Psalm brings to a proper conclusion Scripture's book of Praise and the final *Hallel* (Praise) Psalm {Psalms 145-150} by raising and then answering some strategic questions about Praise [1) From where should we praise God? 2) For what should we praise God? 3) With what should we praise God? and 4) Who should praise God?]

Unfortunately neither the author nor the occasion for the writing of this Psalm is known. Notice that the beginning and ending phrase in this Psalm is the same: "*Praise the Lord*" which is the case in Psalms 146-150. This is a Hebrew grammatical device, that is used to envelope the passage and mark it off as dealing with a particular subject. In this case it is marking the Psalm off as a Psalm of praise, a fitting theme for the conclusion of the book: Praise! It is also important to emphasize that the verb *Praise* is a Piel Imperative, which denotes an intensive active command!

C.H. Spurgeon says, "*We have now reached the last summit of the mountain chain of Psalms. It rises high into the clear azure, and its brow is bathed in the sunlight of the eternal world of worship. It is a rapture. The poet-prophet is full of inspiration and enthusiasm. He stays not to argue, to teach, to explain: but cries with burning words, "Praise Him, Praise Him, Praise Ye the Lord!"*"

· *According to verse 1, where should we praise God from?*

1-*In His Sanctuary*: There is some disagreement over whether this refers to an earthly sanctuary and hence would refer to the Temple in Jerusalem or whether this refers to God's heavenly temple and hence refers to praising God in heaven. Since the Psalm is directed toward men (in particular, Israel) and since the phrase, "*Praise God*" is in the imperative then it is preferable to see this as referring to the Temple in Jerusalem. As it applies to the believer, we certainly should praise God as we are assembled together for worship.

2-*In His mighty expanse*: Sometimes rendered "*in the firmament of His might*." The term *expanse* or *firmament* literally means, "*a hammered out plate*" and is used in Genesis 1 to refer to the expanse of the heavens and the expanse of the sky. Some take it to refer to God's heavenly dwelling place, while others take it to refer to the created universe. It is likely a reference to God's mighty creative work. And thus would indicate that we are directed to praise God from where we are. It is not solely in heaven, where God is to be praised, but God is to be praised here in the midst of His created work. As these two phrases are used together, the principle that needs to be drawn out is that no matter where we are, God is to be praised!

· *According to verse 2, what should we praise God for?*

1-*For His mighty deeds*: This phrase is very simple and clear, that we must praise God for His

works, for what He has done, for His acts of power!

2-For His excellent greatness: God is not just to be praised for what He has done, but also for who He is. We must praise God for His worth and character, for His attributes!

· ***What mighty deeds has God done that you can praise Him for?***

Election, Creation, Salvation, Provision, Protection, Answering Prayer, Sustaining us etc...

· ***What mighty deeds of God do the following verses suggest that we can praise Him for?***

(Psalm 104) He created the world!

(Psalm 139:14) He created us!

(Psalm 66:19-20) He answers prayer!

(2 Corinthians 1:3-4) He comforts us!

(Psalm 16:7) He counsels us!

(Psalm 30:1; 44:7) He delivers us from our enemies!

(Psalm 34:1-4) He delivers us from our fears!

(Psalm 68:19) He bears our burdens!

(Psalm 54:6) He delivers us from troubles!

(Psalm 103:1-3) He forgives sin and heals diseases etc...

(Ephesians 1:3-6) He chose us, predestined us to adoption, and bestowed grace on us!

(1 Peter 1:3-6) He caused us to be born again!

(Genesis 24:48) He provides guidance!

(Deuteronomy 8:10/Psalm 22:26) He provides food for us!

(Psalm 71:23/Ephesians 1:7-10) He redeemed us!

(1 Peter 2:9/Ephesians 2:1-10) He saved us!

(Psalm 19:7-114; 56:4, 10) He gave us His Word!

· ***What do the following verses reveal about God's excellent greatness?***

(Deuteronomy 32:3/Psalm 145:3) He is great!

(2 Corinthians 1:3) He is compassionate!

(Psalm 104:1/Isaiah 24:14) He is clothed with majesty and splendor!

(Daniel 4:37) He is just!

(Psalm 100:4-5; 108:3-4; 117:1-2; 138:2) He is loving and faithful!

(Psalm 7:17) He is righteous!

(Psalm 21:113; 59:16-17) He is strong/powerful!

(Daniel 2:19-23) He is wise!

(Psalm 138:5/Ezekiel 3:12) He is full of glory!

(Psalm 30:4; 72:19; 99:3) His name is great!

· ***According to verses 3-5, what should we praise God with?***

1-with trumpet sound: The trumpet was a wind instrument similar to a ram's horn. The blowing of the trumpet signified a convocation of any type whether for worship, the coronation of a king, or for battle.

2-with harp and lyre: The harp and lyre are similar stringed instruments. The harp was more curved while the lyre was more rectangular. Some lyres had as many as ten strings on them. The harp and lyre are often used interchangeably and likely refer to the same instrument.

3-with timbrel and dancing: The *timbrel* was a tambourine type percussion instrument. It was

comprised of a simple frame covered with an animal skin. It was played on many occasions by certain groups of players, women, military bands and groups of prophets.

4-with stringed instruments and pipe: A reference to stringed instruments in general of which the harp and lyre are the most common. The pipe was actually a flute. It was commonly used in ancient Egypt. The appearance of the flute was usually a double flute or pipe and was used at festive occasions and celebrations.

5-with loud cymbals and resounding cymbals: The cymbal consisted of two bronze plates that when clashed together produced a ringing sound. They also functioned like the timbrels as a percussion instrument. It is unclear what the difference between loud and resounding cymbals was. It is possible that they were different size plates in which one made a loud sound while the other made a softer sound.

Note that the praise is to be done with percussion, wind and stringed instruments. The principle of this part of the psalm seems to be that all instruments should be used for the praise of God.

· *According to verse 6, who should praise God?*

-Everything that has breath: The idea is that all of God's living creation should praise God. This is not some future activity that we do in heaven. This should be a present activity throughout our lives. We should have a God-focus and lift up praise to Him. The passage closes out with one last, "Praise the Lord!" This closing repetition of the phrase is once again an imperative. We are commanded to praise God!

SMALL GROUPS

· *Do you have a heart focused on God?*

· *Do you spend time each day offering praise to God?*

· *What can you do in your walk to better focus on God and offer Him the praise that He deserves?*