



Praise and
Worship

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

AL DENSON

(Psalm 149)

Psalms was the national hymnbook of Israel. It contains 150 poems, or psalms, to be set to music, and worship is the central theme of all of them. The psalms magnify the Lord, exalt His attributes, praise His names, His Word, and His goodness. If we want to learn how to praise and worship our Father, then let Psalms be our textbook. The Hebrew title of the Book of Psalms is "Praise" or "the Book of Praises." If we hold our Bible in our hands and turn to the middle of it, we will be in the Book of Psalms. Likewise, praise of God should be at the center of our lives.

THE PURPOSE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

God delights in praise because He knows it is a special way that we can relate to Him and draw closer to Him. C. S. Lewis said that just as a car is made to run on gas, God made us to run on Himself. He is powerful, sovereign, and holy, and we receive all that we are and have from Him. Apart from God, we have no energy, no power, and no fulfillment in life. Praise releases that energy and power in our lives. God wants us to praise and worship Him not because *He* needs it, but because *we* need it. Praise is a gift to us from God that helps us function more effectively. Praise can change our attitudes.

THE POWER OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Praise expresses and strengthens our faith. True praise is not an attempt to manipulate God into producing the results we desire; rather, true praise expresses acceptance of what God has brought into our lives. Praise helps us accept the situation whether it changes or not. Praise also makes us aware that difficult circumstances are God's blessings in disguise.

When we trust God completely, He is free to work and bring victory to every situation. The victory may come in the form of having our circumstances change, or the circumstances may remain the same while the change comes in us. Either way, our faith is strengthened. Every time we are reminded how much larger God is than our problem, we will be able to trust Him more when the next test of faith comes along.

God's presence is always in us, like electricity in a lamp, but praise is the switch that turns on the power, making us more aware of His presence in our lives. When we focus our attention on God through praise, we acknowledge Him as our power source and we begin to see our problems in the light of His great power. Praise invites the Holy Spirit to make us confident that God is in control.

THE PURIFYING OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

As fire brings the impurities in gold to the surface so they can be skimmed off, when the "heat" is turned up in our lives, the impurities come to the surface as well. If we resist the purification process, however, those impurities settle back into our

lives. God wants us to be free, so He allows us to go through the "Refiner's fire" that will cause the impurities in our lives to rise to the surface. As these impurities are dealt with, the hurtful things that bind us are burned away. When we respond to the fire with praise and worship, we will experience a new purification and freedom.

THE PEACE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

When we give God our praise and worship, we are offering ourselves to Him completely, bowing before Him, yielding to Him fully. Often our praise will be joyful and enthusiastic, but not always. It is important to understand that God's enjoyment of our praise is not based on how we are feeling. We will bring a special kind of joy to the Lord when we praise Him even if we are depressed or exhausted. Praise causes us to enter the influence of His perspective. When that happens, the hurt, fear, frustration, or resentment we are feeling can be replaced with a peace that we never dreamed possible.

The Bible does not command us to *feel* thankful, but to *be* thankful. To give thanks when we do not feel like it is not hypocrisy; it is obedience. This does not mean that we should deny our negative thoughts and feelings. The psalmists were always honest about their feelings and told God about them. But they always combined the pouring out of their feelings with sincere praise. When, with an act of our will, we choose to keep praising in spite of our pain or confusion, God brings peace, freedom, and joy.

When we praise and worship God, we give Him something that nothing else in creation can give—love and adoration. Psalm 22:3 says that God is holy, that He is "enthroned in the praises of Israel." Psalm 84:1, 2, 4 expresses the joy of worship, "How lovely is Your tabernacle, O

LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. . . . Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will still be praising You."

We were created to be worshipers of God. He made us for Himself and He wants to have an intimate relationship with us that will last throughout eternity. Praise and worship bring to our lives purpose, power, unity, and peace. Praise and worship will bless our Father and make Him glad

FURTHER MEDITATION:

Other passages to study about the issue of praise and worship include:

- 2 Samuel 22:2-51
- Psalms 8; 19; 27; 29; 47; 150
- Ephesians 1:3-14
- Revelation 4:4-11; 5:9-14; 7:9-17; 11:15-18; 15:3, 4

To Learn More: Turn to the key passage note on praise and worship at John 4:23, 24 on page 1377. See also the personality profile of Asaph on page 746.

hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²²You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

²⁵The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

²⁶Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

THE WHITENED HARVEST

²⁷And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman;

yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

²⁸The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ²⁹"Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

³⁰Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

³¹In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

³²But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

³³Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?"

³⁴Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold,

KEY PASSAGE



Praise and
Worship

TRUE WORSHIP

(4:23, 24)

Worship has always been very important to God's people. Sometimes, however, people are more concerned about the place, rituals, and ceremonies of worship than they are with its true meaning. And many worship with their mouths but not with their hearts. God doesn't want that kind of worship (Amos 5:21-23).

We can worship God anywhere because He is Spirit. He isn't confined to a building. God wants His people to "worship in spirit and truth." Because Jesus is the truth (John 14:6) we worship God through our acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. And we worship out of hearts made pure by His shed blood. We worship out of love and adoration for God, who reached out to us. We worship when we quiet ourselves before Him, thinking of all He has done for us. We worship also when we praise God with words and music. In whatever setting, we worship when we give God all the glory.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about praise and worship on pages 794, 795. See also the personality profile of Asaph on page 746.

SOUL NOTE



Soulful Worship (4:24) As Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman about worshipping God, He emphasized that "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The Samaritan woman described a conflict about *where* people should worship (4:20); Jesus pointed out *how* they should worship. The true nature of Christian worship is not about places or rituals; instead, it is the response of the soul when it encounters the living God. True worship of God involves opening up and surrendering our lives to Him. **Topic: Knowing God**

- 12 Why have You broken down her hedges,
So that all who pass by the way pluck
her fruit?
- 13 The boar out of the woods uproots it,
And the wild beast of the field devours
it.
- 14 Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts;
Look down from heaven and see,
And visit this vine
And the vineyard which Your right hand
has planted,
And the branch *that* You made strong for
Yourself.
- 16 *It is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down;
They perish at the rebuke of Your
countenance.
- 17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your
right hand,
- Upon the son of man *whom* You made
strong for Yourself.
- 18 Then we will not turn back from You;
Revive us, and we will call upon Your
name.
- 19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!

PSALM 81

AN APPEAL FOR ISRAEL'S REPENTANCE

*To the Chief Musician. On an instrument
of Gath.^a A Psalm of Asaph.*

Sing aloud to God our strength;

81:title ^aHebrew *Al Gittith*



Praise and
Worship

PERSONALITY PROFILE

PRAISING THE LORD WITH ASAPH

(PSALM 81)

Praise and worship are important to God's people and pleasing to God. People were created to bring glory to God, and God enjoys it when His people, alone or gathered with other believers, praise and worship Him.

Asaph was the leader of Israel's worship (1 Chr. 15:17) and the author of several psalms. When King David brought the ark of the covenant to the tabernacle in Jerusalem, Asaph was one of the Levites chosen "to minister before the ark of the LORD, to commemorate, to thank, and to praise the LORD God of Israel" (1 Chr. 16:4). When David wrote a song to commemorate this event, he "delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the LORD" (1 Chr. 16:7).

After the joyous celebration, regular worship in the tabernacle was begun, for David "left Asaph and his brothers there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister before the ark regularly, as every day's work required" (1 Chr. 16:37). Most of Asaph's job in the tabernacle was to make music. King David saw to it that praise and worship included music, for Asaph was of the group separated out to "prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals" (1 Chr. 25:1). According to 1 Chronicles 25:6, 7, Asaph and other music leaders were under the authority of the king himself. Also, 288 singers took part in the tabernacle worship services. Clearly, times of praise and worship were well planned and accomplished, with great glory to God.

Asaph encourages Christians everywhere to express joyful praise with the exuberance of the soul set free. We can praise God with our voices (trained or untrained) and with the accompaniment of many musical instruments. When we praise God, we focus on Him and give Him glory. All believers will one day join a vast choir of angels, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" singing to Christ in heaven (Rev. 5:11-13). *That* will certainly be a time of praise and worship!

To Learn More: Turn to the article about praise and worship on pages 794, 795. See also the key passage note at John 4:23, 24 on page 1377.

you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. ¹⁷And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

¹⁹And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided. ²²So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

²⁴Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. ²⁵And He took off^a their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee

from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen." ²⁷And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. ²⁹But the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

THE SONG OF MOSES

15 Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying:

"The LORD is my strength
and song . . . and
I will praise Him."

EXODUS 15:2

"I will sing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!
The LORD is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation;
He is my God, and I will praise Him;

^{14:25} ^aSamaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Syriac read *bound*.

SOUL NOTE



A New Song (15:1) Moses and the Israelites took time to praise and worship God for miraculous deliverance. They sang (15:1) and danced (15:20). The focus of their praise was on God. "I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously! . . . The LORD is my strength and song," they sang (15:1, 2). Worship may take many expressions, but it must focus on God. Genuine praise pleases Him. In your praise and worship, focus on God. **Topic: Praise and Worship**

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will cut them off. ²⁴You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars.

²⁵“So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. ²⁶No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.

²⁷“I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. ²⁸And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. ²⁹I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. ³⁰Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.

³¹And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River. ³²For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. ³³You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. ³⁴They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

ISRAEL AFFIRMS THE COVENANT

24 Now He said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ²And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come

near; nor shall the people go up with him.”

³So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And

all the people answered with one voice and said,

“All the words which the LORD has said we will do.” ⁴And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose

early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. ⁷Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.” ⁸And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, “This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.”

ON THE MOUNTAIN WITH GOD

⁹Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. ¹¹But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.

¹²Then the LORD said to Moses, “Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.”

23:31 ^aHebrew *Nahar*, the Euphrates

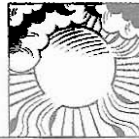
SOUL NOTE



Meeting with God (24:12) As the leaders of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai to worship God, only Moses was permitted to “come near” the Lord (24:2).

The others had to worship God “from afar” (24:1). We will not go up onto Mount Sinai as Moses did, but every day we can come near to God through worship and prayer. Because of Christ, we can “come boldly to the throne of grace”

(Heb. 4:16). The closer we draw to God’s presence, the more clearly we will hear His voice, and the more our lives will be transformed. **Topic: Praise and Worship**



SOUL NOTE

Together (25:1-9) Worship modes were not arbitrary in ancient Israel. The proper patterns and procedures of worship were clearly defined by God, as were the explicit details of the worship center called the tabernacle. The construction and financing of the tabernacle involved the entire community. As believers build a church through planning, giving, and serving, they gain a sense of ownership and participation in God's house. Worshiping together as a community of believers shows what it means to be part of the family of God. Topic: Praise and Worship

THE ARK OF THE TESTIMONY
10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two cubits shall be its length, a cubit its width, and a half its height. 24 And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height, and a cubit and a half its height. 25 You shall make

so you shall make it.

OFFERINGS FOR THE SANCTUARY
25 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 26 Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. 3 And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; 4 blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; 5 ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; 6 oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; 7 onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. 8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just as you shall make it.

THE TABLE FOR THE SHOWBREAD
23 You shall also make a table of acacia wood; two cubits shall be its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height. 24 And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold all around. 25 You shall make

11 And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around. 12 You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners; two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side. 13 And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. 15 The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. 16 And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you. 17 You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width. 18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. 19 Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat. 20 And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. 21 You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. 22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

and its drink offering, you shall offer it as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

SABBATH OFFERINGS

⁹And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering—¹⁰this is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

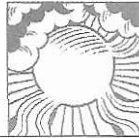
MONTHLY OFFERINGS

¹¹At the beginnings of your months you shall present a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish; ¹²three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; ¹³and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with oil, as a grain offering for each lamb, as a burnt offering of sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. ¹⁴Their drink offering shall be half a hin for a bull, one-third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb; this is the burnt offering for each month throughout the months of the year. ¹⁵Also one kid of the goats as a sin offering to the LORD shall be offered, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

OFFERINGS AT PASSOVER

¹⁶On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. ¹⁷And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. ¹⁸On the first day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. ¹⁹And

SOUL NOTE



Come to God (28:2) For the Hebrews, worship meant regularly bringing offerings to God at appointed times. This continually reminded them that they belonged to God, and it helped them focus on His greatness. For today's believers, worship is accomplished by daily communication with God, commitment to serve Him, and regular gatherings for worship with other believers. Regular worship, both public and private, helps us keep our focus on who God is and what He has done for us. **Topic: Praise and Worship**

OFFERINGS AT THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

²⁹And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary

OFFERINGS AT THE FEAST OF WEEKS

customary work.

²⁶Also on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the LORD at your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. ²⁷You shall present a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, ²⁸with their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for each bull, two-tenths for the one ram, ²⁹and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; ³⁰also one kid of the goats, to make atonement for you. ³¹Be sure they are without blemish. You shall present them with their drink offerings, besides the regular burnt offering with its grain offering.

³⁵the son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, ³⁶the son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, ³⁷the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, ³⁸the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel. ³⁹And his brother Asaph, who stood at his right hand, was Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, ⁴⁰the son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchijah, ⁴¹the son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, ⁴²the son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, ⁴³the son of Jahath, the son of Gershon, the son of Levi.

⁴⁴Their brethren, the sons of Merari, on the left hand, were Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, ⁴⁵the son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiyah, ⁴⁶the son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer, ⁴⁷the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.

⁴⁸And their brethren, the Levites, were appointed to every kind of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

THE FAMILY OF AARON

⁴⁹But Aaron and his sons offered sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, for all the work of the Most Holy Place, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. ⁵⁰Now these are the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, ⁵¹Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerariah his son, ⁵²Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, ⁵³Zadok his son, and Ahimaaz his son.

DWELLING PLACES OF THE LEVITES

⁵⁴Now these are their dwelling places throughout their settlements in their territory,

for they were given by lot to the sons of Aaron, of the family of the Kohathites: ⁵⁵They gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, with its surrounding common-lands. ⁵⁶But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. ⁵⁷And to the sons of Aaron they gave one of the cities of refuge, Hebron; also Libnah with its common-lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its common-lands, ⁵⁸Hilen^a with its common-lands, Debir with its common-lands, ⁵⁹Ashan^a with its common-lands, and Beth Shemesh with its common-lands. ⁶⁰And from the tribe of Benjamin: Geba with its common-lands, Alemeth^a with its common-lands, and Anathoth with its common-lands. All their cities among their families were thirteen.

⁶¹To the rest of the family of the tribe of the Kohathites they gave by lot ten cities from half the tribe of Manasseh. ⁶²And to the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, they gave thirteen cities from the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁶³To the sons of Merari, throughout their families, they gave twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun. ⁶⁴So the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands to the Levites. ⁶⁵And they gave by lot from the tribe of the children of Judah, from the tribe of the children of Simeon, and from the tribe of the children of Benjamin these cities which are called by their names.

⁶⁶Now some of the families of the sons of Kohath were given cities as their territory from the tribe of Ephraim. ⁶⁷And they gave them one of the cities of refuge, Shechem with its

^{6:58} ^aSpelled *Holon* in Joshua 21:15

^{6:59} ^aSpelled *Ain* in Joshua 21:16 ^{6:60} ^aSpelled *Almon* in Joshua 21:18

SOUL NOTE



Sing Along (6:31) David selected a number of people to minister at the tabernacle with music and singing. Their job was to lead the people in worship. David was a writer of many of the psalms and a singer of songs of praise to the Lord. It is only fitting that he would institute music as a major part of worship.

Today, the ministry of praise and worship in our churches owes much of its origin to David. As we sing hymns and choruses in church, we join a choir across the centuries that has praised God in song. **Topic: Praise and Worship**

And consulted together against Your sheltered ones.
They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation,
That the name of Israel may be remembered no more."

For they have consulted together with one consent;
They form a confederacy against You:
6 The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites;
7 Moab and the Hagrites;
Geba, Ammon, and Amalek;
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;
Assyria also has joined with them;
They have helped the children of Lot.

Selah

Deal with them as *with* Midian,
As *with* Sisera,
As *with* Jabin at the Brook Kishon,
Who perished at En Dor,
Who became *as* refuse on the earth.
11 Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb,
Yes, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
12 Who said, "Let us take for ourselves The pastures of God for a possession."
13 O my God, make them like the whirling dust,
Like the chaff before the wind!
14 As the fire burns the woods,
And as the flame sets the mountains on fire,
15 So pursue them with Your tempest,
And frighten them with Your storm.
16 Fill their faces with shame,
That they may seek Your name, O LORD.
17 Let them be confounded and dismayed forever;

Yes, let them be put to shame and perish,
18 That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD,
Are the Most High over all the earth.

PSALM 84

THE BLESSEDNESS OF DWELLING IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

To the Chief Musician. On an instrument of Gath.^a A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

1 How lovely is Your tabernacle,
O LORD of hosts!
2 My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in Your house;
They will still be praising You. Selah

Blessed is the man whose strength is in You,
Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.
As they pass through the Valley of Baca,
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with pools.
7 They go from strength to strength;
Each one appears before God in Zion.^a

84:title ^aHebrew *Al Gittith* 84:7 ^aSeptuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *The God of gods shall be seen.*



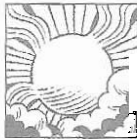
SOUL NOTE

Nothing Less (84:1, 2) People can meet God anywhere, but going into a church provides a quiet place away from daily pressures. The psalmist longed for the "courts of the LORD" and he exclaimed, "My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." Worship is more than just going to church and singing songs—

worship is the cry of the soul to God, the desire to be with Him, praise Him, and hear His voice. We need God. Without Him, our soul experiences spiritual turbulence.

Topic: Praise and Worship

- ³ Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet;
Praise Him with the lute and harp!
- ⁴ Praise Him with the timbrel and dance;
Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!
- ⁵ Praise Him with loud cymbals;
Praise Him with clashing cymbals!
- ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.
Praise the LORD!



SOUL NOTE

Joyous Praise (*ch. 150*) Worship can be expressed to God at any time and in any place. The psalmist called for praise in the sanctuary and in the firmament. The music of praise can be loud and joyous, accompanied by trumpets, lutes, harps, timbrel, dance, stringed instruments, flutes, and cymbals. The focus of praise is God Himself—His “mighty acts” and His “excellent greatness.” In short, “let everything that has breath praise the LORD” (150:6). When believers gather to worship or when they worship in solitude, they must worship joyfully! They are praising the God of the universe who loves them. He deserves our joyous praise. **Topic: Praise and Worship**

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1 The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

THE GREAT DAY OF THE LORD

2 "I will utterly consume everything
From the face of the land,"
Says the LORD;

"I will consume man and beast;
I will consume the birds of the heavens,
The fish of the sea,
And the stumbling blocks^a along with
the wicked.

I will cut off man from the face of the
land,"
Says the LORD.

"I will stretch out My hand against Judah,
And against all the inhabitants of
Jerusalem.

I will cut off every trace of Baal from
this place,
The names of the idolatrous priests^a
with the *pagan* priests—
Those who worship the host of heaven
on the housetops;
Those who worship and swear *oaths* by
the LORD,
But who *also* swear by Milcom;^a
Those who have turned back from
following the LORD,
And have not sought the LORD, nor
inquired of Him."

7 Be silent in the presence of the Lord
GOD;
For the day of the LORD *is* at hand,
For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice;
He has invited^a His guests.

8 "And it shall be,
In the **day of the LORD's** sacrifice,
That I will punish the princes and the
king's children,
And all such as are clothed with foreign
apparel.

In the same day I will punish
All those who leap over the threshold,^a
Who fill their masters' houses with
violence and deceit.

10 "And there shall be on that day," says the
LORD,

"The sound of a mournful cry from the
Fish Gate,

A wailing from the Second Quarter,
And a loud crashing from the hills.

11 Wail, you inhabitants of Maktesh!^a
For all the merchant people are cut
down;

All those who handle money are cut off.

12 "And it shall come to pass at that time
That I will search Jerusalem with lamps.

And punish the men
Who are settled in complacency,^a

Who say in their heart,
'The LORD will not do good,
Nor will He do evil.'

13 Therefore their goods shall become
booty,

And their houses a desolation;
They shall build houses, but not inhabit
them;

1:3 ^aFigurative of idols 1:4 ^aHebrew *chemarim*
1:5 ^aOr *Malcam*, an Ammonite god, also called
Molech (compare Leviticus 18:21) 1:7 ^aLiterally *separated*,
consecrated 1:9 ^aCompare 1 Samuel 5:5
1:11 ^aLiterally *Mortar*, a market district of
Jerusalem 1:12 ^aLiterally *on their lees*, that is,
settled like the dregs of wine



SOUL NOTE

Be Silent (1:7) In Zephaniah's day, King Josiah was leading a spiritual revival. He was abolishing idol worship and reestablishing the worship of God (2 Chr. 34). The prophet Zephaniah reminded the people that God wouldn't tolerate wickedness, complacency, or idolatry (1:4, 5, 12, 13; 2:1, 2). He told the people to "be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD." In that silence, they should consider their sins and the punishment they deserved. At times, we need to stop our activity and stand in silence before God. Only then will we be able to hear what He has to say to us.

Topic: Praise and Worship

¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and do not be ways *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that bitter toward them.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

⁷Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful mini-

²²Bondservants, obey in all things your mas-

ter, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell

you all the news about me. ¹I am sending him

to you for this very purpose, that he ²may

know your circumstances and comfort you

hearts, ³with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved

brother, who is *one* of you. They will make

known to you all things which *are happening*

here.

¹⁰Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you,

with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about

whom you received instructions: if he comes to

you, welcome him), ¹¹and Jesus who is called

Justus. These *are* my only fellow workers for

the kingdom of God who are of the circum-

cision; they have proved to be a comfort to me.

¹²Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a bond-

servant of Christ, greets you, always laboring

in it with thanksgiving; ²meanwhile praying

also for us, that God would open to us a door

for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ,

for which I am also in chains, ⁴that I may

make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

⁵Walk in wisdom toward those *who are out-*

side, redeeming the time. ⁶Let your speech al-

FINAL GREETINGS

ways *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that

bitter toward them.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in all things,

for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest

they become discouraged.

²²Bondservants, obey in all things your mas-

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also for us, that God would open to us a door

for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ,

for which I am also in chains, ⁴that I may

make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

⁵Walk in wisdom toward those *who are out-*

side, redeeming the time. ⁶Let your speech al-

CHRISTIAN GRACES

Master in heaven.

⁷Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a no partiality.

be repaid for what he has done, and there is the Lord Christ. ²⁵But he who does wrong will

the reward of the inheritance; for ⁶you serve

²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive

it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,

heart, fearing God. ²³And whatever you do, do

service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of

ters according to the flesh, not with eye-

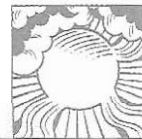
22Bondservants, obey in all things your mas-

they become discouraged.

²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest

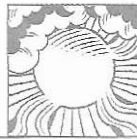
SOUL NOTE

Making Melody (3:16) God should always be the focus of our worship. Music can be a beautiful part of the worship service. Through "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," believers sing their praises to the Lord. The early church did not have Bibles for each worshiper, so they often would teach God's Word through music. Today we have many styles of music. From old hymns to contemporary songs to praise choruses, music that is grounded in the truth of God's Word honors Him.



SOUL NOTE

In His Name (3:17) This verse summarizes the Christian life. Everything believers say and do should be "in the name of the Lord Jesus." In other words, their words and actions should represent Jesus Christ. So how do our Christian lives reflect this standard? Do we greet each new day in the name of the Lord Jesus? Do we go about our daily activities in the name of the Lord Jesus? Do we talk with our family and friends in the name of the Lord Jesus? Do we handle our finances in the name of the Lord Jesus? **Topic: Spiritual Disciplines**



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GREETING TO THE CALLED

¹Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,

To those who are called, sanctified^a by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:

²Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

³Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God^a and our Lord Jesus Christ.

OLD AND NEW APOSTATES

⁵But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; ⁷as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

⁸Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. ⁹Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against

him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. ¹¹Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

APOSTATES DEPRAVED AND DOOMED

¹²These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves. *They are* clouds without water, carried about^a by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; ¹³raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

¹⁴Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

APOSTATES PREDICTED

¹⁶These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they have a great swelling *words*, flattering people to gain advantage. ¹⁷But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹These are sensual

¹ ^aNU-Text reads *beloved*. ⁴ ^aNU-Text omits *God*.
¹² ^aNU-Text and M-Text read *along*.

SOUL NOTE



Praise the Lord (24, 25) The closing words of Jude's letter form a doxology of praise to God. No matter what false teachers might try to do or say against God and His Word, God will watch over His people. He alone will keep them from stumbling and present them "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." We praise Him for this great promise. One day He will bring us to Himself and rejoice to have us with Him. We can trust Him because He is "God our Savior," wise, glorious, majestic, and powerful forever. **Topic: Praise and Worship**