

# Let Everything that Has Breath Praise the Lord!

---

## Introduction

### Worship Sunday

- A. We're going to do something a little different this morning. We're calling it Worship Sunday.
1. Obviously, I hope every Sunday (and every day of the week for that matter) is a worship day for us, but one of the things we haven't done in a while together since all this COVID stuff went down is worship thru music and song. I've missed it. I know so many of you have as well.
    - a. And, while still it's not quite the same as being all together in one place, singing out as one, this morning we do get the opportunity to turn our TVs or devices up (I'd encourage you to do that), get on our knees or on our feet or even on our faces, raise our hands, lift up our voices, and just worship God . . . together.
      - i. Could it be awkward, of course. But it doesn't have to be. I believe God wants to meet with us, if we'd just open our hearts up to Him in these moments.
- B. Now, to be clear, we're still going to spend time in God's Word, but it's going to be a little different and, hopefully, a little shorter than normal (some of you, hearing that, are already starting to worship!).
1. We're going to be reading [Psa 150](#) in a moment here, and I'm actually going to break the text into three sections, and we're just going to do is just take one section, reflect on it for a little bit, then sing; then take the next section, reflect on it a little bit, then sing; and so on. Three of those. That's the cadence. That's the plan. So let's get going!

### The Text

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens!
- <sup>2</sup> Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!
- <sup>3</sup> Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!
- <sup>4</sup> Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!
- <sup>5</sup> Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
- <sup>6</sup> Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! (Psa 150:1-6)

### Mic Drops and Grand Finales

- A. Now, let me at least say a few things up front here.

- B. The book of Psalms, or the Psalter, as it's called, you recall was ancient Israel's hymnbook, they would sing these together in corporate worship and things. And you may have noticed that the Psalm we are looking at this morning, [Psa 150](#), is actually the very last Psalm in the book.
  - 1. And what a way to end: with a call for "[everything that has breath](#)" to praise the Lord! It's a sort of biblical mic drop moment, right? Here we are brought to the pinnacle of the Psalter, the grand finale. If you've ever seen a firework display, this would be when they're just throwing everything they have up into the sky.
    - a. That's the sort of thing we have here. The sky is just exploding with color. The book of Psalms is coming to a glorious and climactic end.
- C. Now, let me give you the three sections, really three points. And, remember, we'll go on to take them one at a time: (1) The Propriety of Praise ([vv. 1-2](#)); (2) The Instruments of Praise ([vv. 3-5](#)); and (3) The Crescendo of Praise ([v. 6](#)).

## (1) The Propriety of Praise (vv. 1-2)

- A. By "Propriety" here, just to be clear, I mean to say: It's proper, it's appropriate, it just makes sense that we praise the Lord. That's what I want us to see here at first.
- B. Look at [vv. 1-2](#) again: "<sup>1</sup> Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! <sup>2</sup> Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!"

### Two Things to Bring Out

- A. As we think about this idea of The Propriety of Praise, there are two things I want to bring out here: (1) "Praise Him in . . ."; and (2) "Praise Him for . . ."
- (1) "Praise Him in . . ."
- A. Notice in [v. 1](#), the psalmist is calling for praise both in God's "[sanctuary](#)" and in His "[mighty heavens](#)." On earth and in heaven.
  - 1. The idea it seems to me is that praise to God ought to be happening everywhere. Every dimension and domain of the created universe ought to be ringing out with praise for the Creator.
    - a. So whether you are on earth, and engaging Him as Israel would (in the sanctuary of the temple and things), or you are in heaven (angelic beings and whatever else) the call is one and the same: "[Praise the Lord!](#)"
      - i. As one commentator writes: "[Earth and heaven can be utterly at one in this. His glory fills the universe; his praise must do no less](#)" (TOTC).
- B. Wherever you are . . . praise the Lord!

## (2) “Praise Him for . . .”

- A. The mere call or command, even, to praise God can, if we’re honest, sometimes leave us feeling even less inclined to do so, right? I mean, who wants to praise a God who’s demanding that we praise Him? It feels off-putting to us, doesn’t it?
1. But such a sentiment is to miss the very heart and nature of this God we are being called to praise. And that is what is brought out in [v. 2](#) with this idea of “[praise Him for . . .](#)”
    - a. You see, there are reasons for our praise. It’s not as though our arms are twisted tight enough and so, fine, we’ll worship. No! It’s that we see how great and how good He is . . . and then it erupts from within, not a lot unlike a firework show. Have you ever had that?
- B. So the psalmist says: “[praise him for his mighty deeds . . .](#)” Now, I just want to fasten onto that phrase “[mighty deeds](#)” for a moment. It’s one word in the Hebrew: *gevurah*.
1. Now, to be sure, these mighty deeds can refer generically to His mighty deeds in creation and things.
  2. But, more specifically, it can refer to those mighty deeds of God on behalf of His people in redemption. The saving work of God manifested throughout history.
    - a. So [Psa 20:6](#): “[Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might \[Hb. \*gevurah\* = mighty deeds\] of his right hand.](#)” So He’s going to come with His might . . . and save me. That’s the idea!
- C. So with verse two, then, we realize that God is not just greater than us . . . He is greater for us. And you’ve got to hear that. It makes all the difference. This is what gives rise to praise.
1. If God were only greater than us, we should find ourselves in dread of Him perhaps, but not in true worship, adoration, or praise. We shall have a sort of resentment, a sort of coldness. We would not sing out in ecstasy. We would bow the knee, perhaps, but not in delight.
  2. But that God is greater for us . . . it changes everything. Here is where our hearts catch fire. He is not only somewhere up there above us, He is right here among us, with us, moving with His greatness for our good.
- D. Moses is onto something in [Deut 3:24](#) when he says: “[O Lord God, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts \[Hb. \*gevurah\*\] as yours?](#)”
1. Now I love this! On the one hand, Moses had seen some amazing, redemptive “[mighty deeds](#)” of YHWH worked on his behalf and on behalf of the people of Israel—the Exodus from Egypt—with the plagues, and the parting of the Red Sea; the provision in the wilderness—with manna from heaven, water from a rock, etc. It’s been glorious and praiseworthy to say the least.
  2. But on the other hand, Moses seems acutely aware that God has only just begun to showcase all He can and will do for the sake of His people.

- a. Here's where you and I and the New Testament church come into view. Moses is right. The stuff he'd seen was just shadows of glory that would come later in full in Christ.
    - i. He's the Passover Lamb working a greater Exodus for His people.
    - ii. He's the bread of life come down from heaven to nourish us.
    - iii. He's the rock struck by the rod of God's wrath on the cross so that we could have living water in the wilderness of this world.
- E. And many of us have experienced of this. We've seen God's mighty deeds wrought on our behalf, to save sinners like us.
- 1. And what's awesome is that, though we stand, not on the near side of the cross with Moses, but now on the far side of it, even still we can say with Moses: "O God, you've only just begun to show us your mighty deeds." It's just going to get better, richer, fuller. Praise the Lord!

## Where Are You?

- A. And this really sets us up for some reflection. Where have you been with this? When's the last time you sang out in joy to God? When's the last time you felt the fireworks erupting from within your heart? This has been a hard season. And that's why we just wanted to set aside a morning to reflect a bit on these things, fight for faith, and praise Him.
- 1. We know He's still God and He's still good, but sometimes our proper response just isn't there, our response is just off.
- B. So I was in our garden the other day about dusk, grabbing some tomatoes and cucumbers and things. And then I heard this rustle back behind some of the plants.
- 1. Now, we've dealt with rodents in years past, so I finally got fed up and just built a big old enclosure to keep them out. But here I heard something, and I was looking around, squinting my eyes trying to spot whatever it was, and then the sound came again and this time I caught the movement. Rats. Two of them. Outside the enclosure thankfully, but eating from the stuff that was growing out the fencing and trying to get in.
  - 2. Now, generally speaking, I have a great affinity for all of God's creatures. I could never be a hunter. I always said I'd rather be a photographer. If I'm going to shoot animals I'll do it on film. I like birdwatching and stuff. I know. It's maybe a bit geeky.
  - 3. But I've got no patience for rats nibbling on my produce. Oh no. So there I was face to face with these little guys. Eyes locked in on each other. They were frozen, I thought from fear.
  - 4. I couldn't reach them with a stick or something, so I did the next best thing. I yelled. With all my might I yelled: "Aaaahhhh!" The neighbors must have thought I was dying or something. But I didn't care. I was going to show these vermin who the owner of this garden was. Like Mr. McGregor coming after Peter Rabbit (Levi loves those stories), there I was. Exerting my authority. Now, to be clear, it wasn't high pitch shriek or something. I tried to go deep and masculine like something out of Braveheart or whatever.

5. And I anticipated they were just going to run and maybe never come back. Rumors were going to spread around all the little rat villages, “Dude, you got to stay away from 549 Jesse James. That guy don’t play.”
6. That would have been the proper response, right? But instead, I kid you not, they just sat there, looking at me, almost as if they were mocking me for just making such a fool of myself. One did start to pee all over my plants, so there’s that. But then they just went back to eating.
7. And I just thought: What’s gone wrong here? That’s not the proper response. That’s not the appropriate reaction. Something’s off.

C. And, you know, sometimes our hearts can be this way with God.

1. When the rats encounter me, they should be set off running, but instead they’re just sitting there.
2. And similarly, positively, when we encounter God—the One who made the heavens and the earth—we ought to be set off praising, yet sometimes, we too, for whatever reason, are just sitting there—calloused, indifferent, distant, cold. It’s like we’re seeing Him, but we’re not really seeing Him. We’ve just grown familiar or apathetic or jaded.

D. So, as we prepare now to sing a couple songs, let me encourage you to use some of this time to check your spiritual temperature on this. Where are you at? Has there been praise in your heart for God lately or not? If not, why? Have you just been distracted with all the stress of recent days? Have you not been reading Scripture, meditating on His word and His works?

1. Repent as the Spirit leads. Recount the ways God’s been good to you, all the ways you’ve seen His mighty deeds, both in Scripture, and in your life lately. Begin to praise Him for it. This first section is really an invitation to open your heart back up to a God who loves you, died to save you, and wants relationship with you.

## (2) The Instruments of Praise (vv. 3-5)

“Praise Him with . . .”

A. In this section now, we move from “Praise Him in . . .” and “Praise Him for . . .” to “Praise Him with . . .” “<sup>3</sup> Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! <sup>4</sup> Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! <sup>5</sup> Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!” (vv. 3-5).

1. So the Psalmist just goes off. He’s listing every kind of musical instrument and thing he can think of. You’ve got wind instruments here. You’ve got string instruments here. You’ve got percussion here. You’ve even got dance.
  - a. It conjures up the imagery of Aaron’s sister Miriam playing music and dancing with all the other Israelite women on the banks of the Red Sea after God’s glorious deliverance (Exo 15:20-21).

- B. When you truly see who God is for you in Jesus—what He’s done and doing—you want to praise Him with whatever you’ve got in your hand, with whatever instrument you can find laying around.
1. And I think that’s the image we’re supposed to catch here. I remember when I was a kid, my sisters and I, we’d play music using whatever we could find around the house. Pots, pans, forks, sticks, buckets. Have you ever done this? Do your kids do this? I think that’s kind of the idea here.
    - a. Whatever you’ve got in your life, use it as an instrument to the praise God.
      - i. So I think we’re invited to expand this beyond literal music here to include, again, whatever you’ve got in your life—your job, your money, your relationships, and so forth. I think the Psalmist is saying, grab that, pick it up and play sweet music to Jesus with it. Everything in your life is meant to be an instrument of praise. Do you know what I mean?
- C. So, bringing the first and second points together now, the idea is that, we should be praising the Lord, not only wherever we are, but also in whatever we’re doing.
1. In other words: Your entire life should be one glorious hymn played out in praise of the greatness and goodness of God for you in Jesus. That’s the picture.
- D. It’s like Paul would say in [Rom 12:1-2a](#): “<sup>1</sup> I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.<sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed . . .”
1. It’s not so much your music that makes up your worship, but your life, a Christ-exalting, self-sacrificing, Spirit-transformed life. That’s music to His ears!
- E. Let me give you a quick example. Whatever you’ve got in your hand, let it be an instrument of praise to God.
1. So we grab tacos, put them on plates, two and two. Now I’m bringing the tacos over to the table, and as I do, I notice, one pair of tacos is noticeably bigger than the other. More meat, more avocado, more cheese. It’s just better.
  2. What do you do? Which one do you give your wife? Well, “I’m the man, Lord knows I need more food than my cute little wife, right? I should have it.”
  3. It’s an instrument. How are you going to play it? “It’s about me!” Or, “Jesus, you have given your life in love for me, I can give my wife these tacos in love for her . . . and in praise of You!”

## Where Are You?

- A. So, again, I wonder, how are you doing with this? What’s in your hand? Are you using it as instrument of praise?
1. Your job, your money, your sexuality, your intelligence, your free time, your parenting, your friendships, your health, your sickness, your joys, your sorrows.

- a. Is Christ being praised in these things, through the way you're handling them, or are you throwing off the song with your selfishness? Like the guy who's playing the percussion offbeat, or the gal who forgot to tune her guitar before strumming into the song.
- B. As we go on to sing a couple more songs, consider, am I holding stuff back from God? Am I dancing to my own beat? Am I strumming my own song? Or is it all on the altar? Is it all an instrument? Ask God to search you and make you that living sacrifice, that song of worship that He so delights in.
- 1. Don't just give God your voice as we go onto sing now, give Him your heart, give Him your life. He's given His for you.

### (3) The Crescendo of Praise (v. 6)

#### The End of the Psalter and End of the Age

- A. So here now we come to the last verse of this Psalm and we read this: *“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!”* (v. 6).
- B. I love that the book of Psalms ends on this note, because really what we come to understand from the rest of Scripture is that all of history itself will actually end on this note as well. In other words: this is not just something that comes at the end of the Psalter, it's something that's coming at the end of the age.
- 1. While this verse is clearly relevant to the present moment, and we certainly should pray and labor to see everything that has breath coming to praise the Lord more and more, it also a most profound foreshadowing of the future—the world that is on the way, coming with the return of Christ!
- C. I'm thinking in particular of [Rev 5](#), where John seeing a vision of what's coming at the end of the age, talks about this scroll that no one can seem to open. The scroll seems to stand for God's plan for history, and the fulfillment of it, and no one is able to bring it to pass, until, at last, He sees Jesus, the Lion of Judah, *“a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain”* (v. 6). And He alone can open the scroll.
- 1. And so praise just breaks out, listen to this: *“<sup>8</sup> . . . [T]he four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb . . . <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, <sup>10</sup> and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” <sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup> saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” <sup>13</sup> And [here it is] I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them,*

saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” (vv. 8-13).

- a. In other words: in view of this Lamb who was slain, everything that has breath is praising the Lord—Heaven and earth coming together in song!
- D. This is how the story ends. This is where God is taking the world in Jesus. And as Christians we can't forget it.
1. I imagine in the stress of recent days, we've often wondered where is this world headed? We're anxious about our physical health and well-being; we're anxious about the economy and what's going to happen to the markets or our job; we're anxious about race relations and if we're ever going to get it right; we're anxious about governing authorities and politics; we're anxious about the environment and why everything's on fire, we're anxious . . .
- E. Listen, the secular person has to be anxious about these things, because to them this world is all there is and the future is a frightening and unknown prospect.
1. But it doesn't need to be this way for the Christian. Oh sure, we labor to make this world a better place for all, but we know the One who alone is ultimately going to make all the wrong right—the One who can break the seals and open the scroll. So we can have peace. So we can lift our voices and praise.
- F. So I'd encourage you, as we sing this last song, take all the stress and anxiety, all the stuff that's burdening you, and just lay it at the feet of the Lamb. Reconsider where all of this is headed, how the story ends. And let's use the breath He's given us to praise!