

A Panoramic Perspective of Praise (Psalm 150)

Aaron Keyes

I've just recently finished a six month study in the Psalms, studying the reasons for worship and praise all throughout the book. Amazing study. The entire book of Psalms could be summed up in one word: Praise.

Definition of Praise: Adoration. Celebration. To acclaim, extol, commend, applaud.

There are several different Hebrew words which are all translated *praise* in our Bibles, each of them showing a different **flavor, taste, and style** of praise. Yet they all share in common **Enthusiasm, Energy, and Activity!**

Five most common Hebrew words for Praise (in Old Testament)

1. **Hallel:** Occurs **99 times in O.T.**; **33** of them are in the Psalms. Means to “**celebrate, to laud, to boast.**” It’s the root of Hallelujah.
2. **Yadah:** Means to worship with **extended hands**, raised arms. My son Cooper loves having his tummy rubbed with my face! He was sitting in his little chair and I stuck my face down in his belly and started kissing him—he gets this huge smile and starts giggling and raised his hands to be picked up out of the chair. As if he was saying, Yadah! Yadah!, **you know, yadda yadda.**
3. **Barak:** To declare **God as the origin of power, success, or victory.** Recognizes Him as the source of all **resources, strategy, and strength.**
4. **Shabach:** To **shout or commend loudly!** Kurt Warner completes another touchdown pass to Isaac Bruce; Mike Madono assists Brett Hull for another sudden-death game-winning goal. The **fans jump up and shabach.** How much more should we *shabach* our living Messiah for what He’s done for us.
5. **Gil:** To **circle in joy**; to dance in circles. **Megan** on a Sunday afternoon a few weeks ago, realized that she didn’t have to teach the next day—vacation day... Upon remembering this, she just spun in circles in excitement! She **Gil-ed!**

So if that’s what it MEANS to praise, what’s the Bible’s opinion on our involvement in Praise?

The Exhortation to Praise:

Psalm 150.6: “Let Everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!”
Imperative Form of the word. It’s **not a suggestion, invitation, or good idea**.
It’s imperative, it’s a command! The **Bible COMMANDS** we praise the LORD.

Is it a viable option to say, “It’s **not my style** to lift my hands. It’s **not my thing** to circle in joy. I’m praising God too, just silently, quietly. I’m **not cool** with shouting and making a bunch of noise?” Not if you say you’re praising God. Worshipping, sure. Praising? Nope. At least not by what the Bible says.

So the Bible commands we PRAISE (Hallal, Yadah, Barak, Shabach, Gil) the Lord. **Is anyone exempt** from this command? YES! Who is it? The person who’s not comfortable dancing in joy? No. **The person who is not breathing. Let everything that has breath...** I do believe everyone here *has breath*. If not, our service will turn into a funeral really quickly. If you’re alive, you’re commanded to praise the Lord.

Okay Aaron, I see the definition of Praise, and I see the exhortation to Praise, but what’s the Motivation?

Motivation: Why should I praise God (as if his command weren’t reason enough...)

1. **Praise produces productivity. It creates creativity.** **The world was created in an atmosphere of praise.** I love to create art. My favorite mediums are drawing and photography. My favorite pictures were all drawn while I was listening to music; it helps me create. This very outline was typed out while listening to music; it aids me in any type of production. Most people are this way. People just like background music. I believe GOD does too. He works to background music.

A. **Job 38:3-7** God speaks to Job and says, “Brace yourself like a man; I will question You and you shall answer me. Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation...On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—**while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?**”

I wonder how much ministry, how many miracles have never happened in my life, in my ministry because I wasn’t creating an atmosphere of praise in which God would come and do something great.

B. **Acts 2: 1-13.** The early Christians were all together in the “House” or the Temple, praising God, when the Holy Spirit descended, tongues of fire, a mighty sound like a rushing wind filled the place... The people outside were wondering what was happening, thinking that the Christians were all drunk, speaking rubbish and

making noise. Peter stands up and says, “They’re not drunk! IT’s only 9 in the morning (the 3rd hour).” He begins preaching to the crowd there, and 3,000 people become Christians. Baptized right there on the spot! I believe that **because praise preceded Peter’s preaching, there was created an atmosphere in which God would come and work.**

C. **Isaiah 30:30-32.** “The Lord will cause men to hear his majestic voice and will make them see his arm coming down with raging anger and consuming fire, with cloudburst, thunderstorm and hail. **The voice of the Lord will shatter (the Enemy); with his scepter he will strike them down. Every stroke the Lord lays on them with his punishing rod will be to the music of tambourines and harps,** as he fights them in battle with the blows of his arm.”

The Antithesis of this principle is also true. Refusal to praise brings unproductivity. Criticism of other’s praise brings unfruitfulness, literally as it did to David’s wife Michal as he danced with all his might before the Lord and she condescended his praise of God. The Bible says she never had children from that day forward. The danger of being critical regarding other peoples’ praise! Look at people who criticize praise even still today—they live unfruitful, unproductive lives.

2. Not only was the world begun and created in an atmosphere of praise, also **The world will climax in a crescendo of praise.**

Revelation 18: The earth is being destroyed in the last days, by consuming fire and 110 pound hailstones (Isaiah 30 prophecy we looked at earlier). In Revelation 19 the angels aren’t saying, “**110 pounds!** That’s pretty heavy God. Couldn’t you **downsize** this destruction a little? Couldn’t you control that fire a little more???” No, the angels again are worshipping God, saying “**Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments.**”

3. The world is imprinted with a program to praise. All of creation has been praising God since day one of all time.

Let’s look at a picture of all of creation in praise of God. <Play David Crowder Music Video, then sing the same chorus with congregation... You Are, You were, You will always be our God>

The Rivers clap their hands, Trees wave their branches, Oceans dance with joy. All of creation is in harmony with God’s program of praise. Only humans choose to

rebel against God's purpose and plan. Think when Jesus walked the earth. **Even the Winds obeyed his voice, the seas supported his feet, the fish submitted to his direction, and the rocks would cry out if nobody else would. (Luke 19:40)** (First Rock Concert) **All of creation is in harmony with God's program**, except for us. We have the choice: Submit, or rebel.

4. God is particularly comfortable in the place of praise.

Psalm 22:3 "God is enthroned on the praises of his people..." Of course, God is omnipresent; He's everywhere, but I believe He is at home in the place of praise. He inhabits the praises of his people.

5. Praise is the entryway into his courts.

Psalm 100: "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his Name." Feeling far from God, like he's distant to you? Be seeker sensitive: Praise him in spirit and truth, and He will find you! He's looking for people to come into his presence, and Praise is the door.

6 Praise is the Divine prescription from the Divine Physician for our despair and depression.

The key is not psychoanalysis, psychiatry, or introspection.

Isaiah 61:3 "...a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair."

7.Praise is a powerful weapon to overcome the wickedness of Satan. God uses our Praise as instruments of war in the heavenly realms.

II Chronicles 20—Jehosaphat sends the choir, praising God, into the front lines of battle. The enemy became so disoriented they killed each other. The Israelites had only to walk onto the battlefield and pick up the spoils of war.

Every Old Testament story is an illustration of a New Testament principle. In spiritual warfare today, if we go in praising the Father, our enemy, demons, will be completely disoriented and devastated in the place and time of praise. They cannot handle it.

Psalm 149:6—"Let the praises of God be on their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, to carry out the

sentence written against them. **This is the glory of all his saints.**” It is our glory to praise the Father and go to war against Satan.

I believe demons are destroyed by praise because it reminds them of their unsuccessful revolt in Heaven from **Ezekiel 28**. We infer that Satan was the most glorious of all the angels, the leader of worship in Heaven before the creation of the world. Pride led him to believe that he should be the object of worship, and thus God cast him into Hell. In praise and worship, I believe Satan’s reminded of his fouled attempt to usurp the throne of God, and he simply cannot be in the same place as God’s praise.

8. Praise brings liberation and freedom. God delights in setting the captives free, and using our Praise as his instrument of doing such.

Acts 16: Paul and Silas in jail, they begin praising God there in prison. Verse 25: “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God...Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody’s chains came loose.”

Jonah 2:9 Jonah’s in the belly of the whale. Fish are slapping him in the face, and he’s not whining, complaining, saying “Oh Whale, poor me.” He begins to praise God with a song, and the very next verse says that the Lord commanded the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land.

On more than one occasion I’ve been leading worship for a group of people, and after our time together people have come up to me and told me of how they accepted Christ during the time of singing and praise. People have told me that “Ranch Praise” led them to finding God! ***God uses his people praising his Name to set the prisoners free!***

Psalm 142: 7 “Set me free from my prison that I may praise your Name.”

II Cor. 3:7 “Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom...”

Conclusion: **Knowing** what it means to praise God, **seeing** the Bible’s commands to praise God, and **understanding** some aspects of what’s happening when we praise God **lead to a choice**. Will you today choose to **be in harmony** with the rest of all creation, **extending your hands in praise, circling in joy**? Or will you choose to be part of the sliver of creation that continues to rebel against the plans and purposes of God?

You’re either submitting, or you’re in rebellion. No middle ground. It’s not an option any more than breathing is. To live, you must give God his praise. To withhold is to perish and be in discord with the purpose we were created.