

AN EXHORTATION TO PRAISE GOD

BIBLE TEXT: Psalm 33:1-22; 148:1-9; 150:1-6.

LESSON 31 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD" (Psalm 150:6).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Psalm 33:1-22;

- ¹ Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.
- ² Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.
- ³ Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.
- ⁴ For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.
- ⁵ He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.
- ⁶ By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.
- ⁷ He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.
- ⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
- ⁹ For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.
- ¹⁰ The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.
- ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.
- ¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.
- ¹³ The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.
- ¹⁴ From the place of his habitation

NOTES:

From Whom All Blessings Flow

"Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous," was the theme of many of the Psalms. The praises of God rolled from the heart and lips of the Psalmist just as they should from every child of God. He thanked God for His mighty works, for His great gifts, for His mercy to men. He praised the Lord with everything that was in him; and then he exhorted others to join him in his rejoicing, not only the righteous, but every man: "Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children" (Psalm 148:11, 12). The Psalmist did not wait until he received blessings from the Lord to offer his praises, but he rejoiced because "it is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD" (Psalm 92:1).

All nature joins to praise God, so how much more should we who have received His great blessings and for whom the Lamb of God was slain. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work" (Psalm 19:1). Job tells us that the morning stars "sang together" at the dawn of creation. Poets have often asked, "What are the wild waves saying?" They are singing the praises of God, their Creator "Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein" (Psalm 69:34). "Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together" (Psalm 98:8). "Break forth into singing, ye mountains O forest, and every tree therein" (Isaiah 44:23).

Love of God

We sing praises to God because we love Him. If there is no praise in our heart, the love of God is not there. When Jesus comes in, everything seems changed about us:

"Brighter shone the sun above me,
Sweeter seemed the birds to sing;
All the earth took on new beauty,
When mine eyes beheld the King."

When we are children of God we try to please Him, and we are not afraid to have Him watch our actions. David said, "In thy presence is fullness of joy" (Psalm 16:11). A disobedient child will feel condemned and will try to hide from the presence of God; but there is joy in obedience: "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:8). Peter tells us that we rejoice "with joy unspeakable and fun of glory" (I Peter 1:8).

Wise men have made wonderful inventions and discoveries to try to make people happier, but instead they have become more discontented. Many of the things that were made to help man have been used as instruments of destruction. Little that man manufactures or possesses can make him happy. Some of the richest men have been known to be the most miserable.

The Author of Joy and Peace

True happiness can be found only in God, and it is free to all. The poorest pauper, the most humble slave, can have just as much of the peace of God in his heart as the man who has all the comforts of life about him. We are told who the happy man is: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God" (Psalm 146:5).

he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

¹⁵ He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

¹⁶ There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

¹⁷ An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

¹⁹ To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

²⁰ Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.

²¹ For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

²² Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

Psalm 148:1-9;

¹ Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

² Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

³ Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

⁴ Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.

⁶ He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:

⁸ Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

⁹ Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

Any sinner who comes to Jesus in repentance and is pardoned receives the joy of Christ's salvation. The Lord takes away his burden and gives him a song. "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God" (Psalm 40:3). There is a song in the heart of the Christian continuously, even when the "clouds are hanging low." None of the turmoil and strife on the outside can disturb that deep peace in the heart of the follower of God. The song is there an through the day and night: "The LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me" (Psalm 42:8). "Oh, how precious the songs in the night!"

When to Praise God

God expects His children to praise Him always. We are exhorted in Hebrews 13:15: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." In I Thessalonians 5:16-18, we read: "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

We remember when Paul and Silas were in prison, their feet in the stocks, their backs bleeding because they had been beaten hard, they could still sing praises to God. They showed that they really loved God because they enjoyed suffering for Christ. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (II Timothy 2:12). Paul was in a Roman prison for years, but he did not get discouraged and lose the praise out of his heart. While there he wrote to the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Do not rejoice only when you are happy, but always.

Habakkuk wrote: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat", the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Habakkuk could praise God even when there was a depression on. The crops were poor, and he had lost his flocks and herds, but he still had the love of God in his heart, which made him happy. He went on to say; "The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet and he will make me to walk upon mine high places" (Habakkuk 3:17-19). Making his feet like "hinds' feet" meant that God put a spring into his step.

Answered Prayers

When we come before God and ask His blessings, He wants us to come with praises in our hearts. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). Then God will answer prayer. The Children of Israel proved that in Old Testament times. When some neighbouring countries declared war on them, they praised God and He delivered them. "And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten" (II Chronicles 20:22).

We read of the gratitude in the hearts of the wonderful characters in the Bible, but we have even greater reason to praise God. The prophets desired to see our day when the Latter Rain would fall. Joel prophesied, "Rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month" (Joel 2:23). We who have received the baptism of the Holy Ghost have the Spirit in our hearts that is continually offering up praise to God. We are God's witnesses, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people"; to show forth the praises of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light (I Peter 2:9).

Psalm 150:1-6.

¹ Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

² Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

³ Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.

⁴ Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

⁵ Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

⁶ Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Praise Him!

The Psalmist consummated his songs of praise in the last three chapters of the Psalms. He called upon the angels, the sun, moon, and stars, the elements of nature, all the men of the earth, the beasts of the field, everything that God had made, to praise God. Praise Him in every place; praise Him with every instrument; praise Him with any means -- only praise Him! And he closed with: "Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD" (Psalm 150:6).

QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote the Psalms?
2. Give three reasons for praising the Lord in church services.
3. Give three ways in which this may be done.
4. Is praising the Lord restricted to certain ones?
5. When is it most important to rejoice and praise God?