

Praise

Psalm 8:2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

Praise stops Satan. Demons do not want to be around praise.

Praise does two other things besides stopping Satan. It brings an intimacy with God where we can feel, in a real way, the presence of the Holy Spirit and it puts down our flesh, so we can hear better what God has to say. We feel God's presence so closely that the last thing we want to do is sin and break that fellowship. Let's next look at the nuts and bolts of praise.

Psalm 22:3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Praise is where God lives.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

We are all priests and as a priest we have a job to do. Whether we like it or not, as an act of obedience, we are to show forth praise (manliness, valor, excellence, praise, virtue).

As we look at praise, I want to show how the different Hebrew words put different meanings to the word "praise".

Psalm 100

A Psalm of Praise (*to-daw' adoration, a choir of worshippers, confession, sacrifice of praise, thanks*)

1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise (teh-hil-law' laudation, a hymn) : **be thankful unto him, and bless his name.**

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalm 100 gives us the outline for coming before God. If I say "Jesus", heaven stops to hear what I have to say. I write this because I want everyone to understand that we have access to the throne of God by the blood of Jesus and His name. It is different for God to hear me and for me to hear God. We come to God singing loudly, through His gates singing songs of thankfulness and into His courts with praise. We are in His presence and need to hear what He has to say. It surprised me how easy it was to have my mind quiet after 20-30 minutes of wild, loud, praise.

Alleluia = Hallelu Yah = Praise the Lord

Halal – *haw-lal'* prime root – to be clear (orig. of sound, but usually of color) To shine; hence to make a show, to boast; and thus to be (clamorously) foolish; To rave; to celebrate; also to act stupid; to act like a madman or fool

Psalm 150

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.

All these words “praise” are *haw-lal*.

Every Sunday morning all over the world people are saying or singing “Alleluia”. Do they know what they are saying? If they did know, how many people would say it? We are saying, “Let’s see how foolish and noisy we can act in praise to God.”

When the Ark was brought back to Jerusalem, David danced in the street in his underwear. (2 Samuel 6) We can see by David’s life that he understood his covenant. As we grow in our understanding that our covenant with God through Jesus is better than David’s, it increases our joy. Sometime it is so good we want to get out of our pews and start running around the building, but then our mind says, “Shut up and be quiet, you’re in church”. (That’s a joke if you didn’t catch it.)

Psalm 100 can be done as an act of your will. We can come before God singing, dancing, making a lot of noise, and playing instruments as an act of obedience. The wilder it is, the more God loves it. This is the best way to put down the flesh and clear out our minds to be able to hear what God has to say to us. In a faith sharing group my wife and I were in, a lady said she just could not hear anything God was saying and could not feel the closeness she had felt before. I gave her an Integrity Music tape and told her to spend the first 20-30 minutes of her prayer time singing with this tape and not to worry if it uses up most of the prayer time. She came back to the next meeting happily saying it worked. She could hear from God and recaptured that closeness.

Sometime when you all are alone in your house, get two pot lids and clang them together and march around the house singing your favorite song. You will feel like an idiot and your flesh will hate it. Then, just sit down and ask God if he has anything to say to you. You will be amazed at how clear God’s voice will be. Or pick up your Bible and start reading, in a short time you will begin seeing things you have never seen before.

We have two ways to go. We can say, “We don’t do that here, and God didn’t really mean He wanted me to dance around like an idiot.” Or we can try it, or at least say that God wants us to act foolish, but I do not have the spiritual guts to do it. God can deal with us saying that we can’t do it. He can help us and work with us until we can do it. God is on our side. Just because our flesh won’t let us do something, God is just happy that we try.

This is the start of understanding praise. We can go all the way to where God is enthroned on our praises.

More Hebrew words for praise and their definitions from Strong’s Concordance:

Shabach - 1) to soothe, still, stroke **2)** to laud, praise, commend, congratulate, to boast

Tehillah - **1)** praise, song or hymn of praise **a)** praise, adoration, thanksgiving (paid to God) **b)** act of general or public praise **c)** praise-song (as title) **d)** praise (demanded by qualities or deeds or attributes of God) **e)** renown, fame, glory

2) object of praise, possessor of renown (fig)

Zamar - **1)** to sing, sing praise, make music **1)** to make music, sing **2)** to play a musical instrument. (This would be an instrumental praise.)

Towdah - **1)** confession, praise, thanksgiving **a)** give praise to God **b)** thanksgiving in songs of liturgical worship, hymn of praise **c)** thanksgiving choir or procession or line or company **d)** thank-offering, sacrifice of thanksgiving **e)** confession

Yadah - **1)** to throw, shoot, cast **a)** to shoot (arrows) **b)** to cast, cast down, throw down **c)** to give thanks,, laud, praise **d)** to confess, confess (the name of God) **e)** to confess (sin) **f)** to give thanks. (The root word is yad which means hand. This means to praise with hand movements. Clapping, lifting hands and maybe signing would be good examples.)

Selah - **1)** to lift up, exalt **1)** a technical musical term probably showing accentuation, pause, interruption

Hilluwl – rejoice, make merry, praise

Barak – to bless, kneel, be adored, salute. (This is usually translated bless.)

We start out singing, clapping and seeing how stupid we can look. This ushers us into God's presence. Now our mind is clear, our flesh is put down, and we can draw closer and closer to God's throne. As we do, we feel the Holy Spirit moving in our spirit. If it is a congregation, we can feel the Holy Spirit moving through the building. God takes the Word that is being ministered and speaks to us, showing us things in the Word we had never seen before. God can minister to us in ways we don't understand and we don't even know it is happening at the time. We can feel the love of God, and it does not go away the next day like drugs or alcohol.

Praise helps us avoid sin by stopping Satan, by bringing us into where God lives so that we can feel that God is real, and giving us an intimacy that we do not want to break off by sinning.

In conclusion, prayer builds power and intimacy, and praise stops Satan. Praise also brings intimacy and gives us a reality of the presence of God, because God lives in the praises of his people.