

## HURC MIDWEEK WORSHIP – 9 SEPT 2020 – PRAISE THE LORD (Ric Lambert)

Welcome to today's service

If you are a visitor a special welcome to you.

I hope we all meet with God here this morning

Just a few things before we start:

Please stay in the chairs you are using.

Please do not congregate together and chat after the service or congregate by the doors outside.

Remember to leave space for those who want to leave straight away.

Please keep your distance 2mts from each other

Please leave by the door marked exit.

Micheal spoke about Psalm 149 at the last service. I would like to continue on the theme of praise with Psalm 150

### Psalm 150

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his Temple!

Praise his strength in heaven!

<sup>2</sup> Praise him for the mighty things he has done.

Praise his supreme greatness.

<sup>3</sup> Praise him with trumpets.

Praise him with harps and lyres.

<sup>4</sup> Praise him with drums and dancing.

Praise him with harps and flutes.

<sup>5</sup> Praise him with cymbals.

Praise him with loud cymbals.

<sup>6</sup> Praise the LORD, all living creatures!

Praise the LORD!

SONG: Praise Him on the trumpet

Our language is filled with clichés, isn't it? Just listen to athletes who are interviewed after a game.

The winners say things like this:

We came to play

We brought our A-game

We played our hearts out.

Things sound a bit different in the losers' locker room:

We beat ourselves

We didn't get the job done

They wanted it more than we did

A cliché is really an overused metaphor that doesn't really mean anything, or help anyone.

Here are some more that we hear on a regular basis:

Time will tell

No news is good news

Live and let live

What goes around comes around

One step at a time

When at first you don't succeed, try try again

Don't worry, be happy

We also use "Christian Clichés" far too often.

While many of the things we say represent profound truth and real sentiments, religious jargon comes flying out of our mouths without much thought behind it. Terms and expressions like, "fellowship," "I'm praying for you," "koinonia," "agree with God," and even "Praise the Lord," can lose their impact because of overuse and repetition.

As we come to the end of the Book of Psalms, we notice that each of the last 5 Psalms begins with, "Praise the Lord," and each Psalm increases in praise and joy until we come to the last one in the holy hymnbook **Psalm 150**.

For the psalmist, "praise the Lord" was definitely not a cliché but an ecstatic expression of unbridled joy! In six short verses, he uses the phrase 13 times.

Every sentence starts off with "Praise Him" and is very short it's as if he can't wait to get to the next opportunity to say, "Praise the Lord" again.

The word, "praise" is derived from a Latin word which means to prize.

When we praise, we are expressing our approval by valuing something or someone who has worth or merit.

The word also means to "shine" or "make a show by raving and celebrating."

To praise the Lord is to prize Him and rave about Him as the only one worthy of glory and honour.

Lets look at the verses so that we can know Him and make Him known

#### 1) Where to Praise—vs. 1

Verse 1 begins with a bang: "Praise the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens." The "Lord" is "Jehovah," which means, "the self-existent and eternal one." The psalmist then shifts his focus to another name and calls him, "God" or "El" in Hebrew, which means, "Strong and mighty." We are to praise the eternal, strong and mighty God in "His sanctuary," which is a reference to the temple, where God used to dwell. Since Jesus died and rose again, God now "tabernacles" within His people, choosing not to dwell in a building. We are His temple and should therefore live out the implications of what that means. While God does not reside in this auditorium, He does reside within us. The call to praise also extends to the "mighty heavens." The psalmist is calling the firmament, and everything above it, to break out into a celebration of praise. Verse 1 is really saying, "Praise God in heaven and on earth." And so, verse 1 answers the question, "Where are we to praise Him?" We're to do it everywhere.

Verse 2 gives us the answer to the question, "Why are we to praise Him?"

#### 2) Why We Praise—vs. 2

We're called to rave about God for at least two reasons. First, we praise Him for what He does. We see this in the first part of verse "Praise Him for His acts of power." This is the theme of many of the psalms. The phrase, "acts of power" carries with it the idea of God as a champion because of the victory He has won. His acts of power are displayed in relation and in our own lives as we enjoy the benefits of His grace, forgiveness, and salvation. Some of you have great reason to praise the Lord for some recent ways in which He has demonstrated His acts of power in your life. You've seen Him restore a relationship, give you victory over a sin, renew your health, or answer a specific prayer request. You're praising Him today for what He's done in your life and you should. But, we're also to praise Him for who He is in the second part of verse 2: "Praise Him for His surpassing greatness." This is especially evident in the last group of praise psalms.

**Psalm 145:3**--“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom.”

**Psalm 147:5**--“Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit.”

When we praise God for who He is, we are recognizing his surpassing greatness, or as the Hebrew indicates, for His “muchness of greatness and abundant magnitude.” This is a good reminder for us. When we praise Him, we should do it for what He’s done in our lives and we should praise Him simply for who He is.

### 3) How We Praise—vs. 3-5

As we move to the next section in verses 3-5, we learn How to Praise God. Many of us would be a bit unsettled if we worshipped the way the Israelites did. Their music was loud and boisterous.

**Psalm 150** describes an incredible praise band, the instruments in the orchestra sounded out their praise to God. Large choirs and worship teams sang their anthems heralding God’s greatness. Let’s take a look at how they praised:

“Praise Him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise Him with the harp and lyre, praise Him with tambourine and dancing, praise Him with the strings and flute, praise Him with the clash of cymbals, praise Him with resounding cymbals.” The Israelites used 3 types of musical instruments wind, string, and percussion and all three are used in this pinnacle of praise in **Psalm 150**. This list of instruments appears to be in a random order and it’s likely that each one was played when it was mentioned and continued to be heard through the last “Praise the Lord.”

The first one listed is the trumpet. This was also referred to as the shophar, or ram’s horn. It was the greatest of the Jewish instruments, and could be heard from a long distance away. It is still used in Jerusalem to announce the beginning of the Sabbath. The sound of the trumpet in the Old Testament is associated with the grandest and most solemn events, such as the giving of the Law, the proclamation of jubilee (explain), the coronation of kings, and the raging of war. The trumpet will also be heard again when Jesus returns and the dead are raised. 1 Cor. 15:51-52--“Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”

After the blast of the trumpet, verse 3 calls us to “praise Him with the harp and lyre.” We go from an explosive expression of praise to the sweet sound of strings. The harp is mentioned more than any other instrument and was played powerfully by David. Scholars believe that the harp and the lyre were similar in function and design, but the harp was probably larger.

Verse 4 gives us the next instruments of worship the tambourine and dancing. Associated with the deliverance at the Red Sea, this form of praise was jubilant and expressive.

**Exodus 15:20-21** describes the scene: “Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them: ‘Sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted. The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.’” The playing of the tambourine was often accompanied with dancing. The Hebrew word for “dance” indicates a “twirl or a twist,” and was done in an attitude of protracted praise and adoration. The hands and the feet were both set in motion and the entire body moved in response to God’s greatness and His mighty acts of power. Are there not periods of life when we are so happy that we could dance for joy? Brothers and sisters, there is enough in our faith to create and justify the highest degree of euphoric delight which breaks forth into melodious movement. Verse 4 combines the joyful sounds of the tambourine with strings and the flute. Strings refer to instruments similar to the violin or cello. The word “flute” represents the whole class of wind instruments and has been translated “organ” in some Latin translations.

Verse 5 kicks up the volume level: “Praise Him with the clash of cymbals, praise Him with resounding cymbals.” These instruments were used in religious ceremonies and were played by the priests. They

made a loud, distinctive sound when banged together. When the walls of Jerusalem were dedicated in **Nehemiah 12:27**, "...the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps, and lyres." The phrase, "resounding cymbals" can be translated, "the clamour of joy." God wants us to clamour with joy.

Spurgeon, in his commentary on the Psalms, captures the essence of **Psalm 150**: "Let the clash of the loudest music be the Lord's: let the joyful clang of the loftiest notes be all for Him. Praise has beaten the tambourine, swept the harp, and sounded the trumpet, and now for a last effort, awakening the most heavy of slumberers, and startling the most indifferent of onlookers, she dashes together the disks of brass, and with sounds both loud and high proclaims the glories of the Lord."

#### 4) Who Is To Praise—vs. 6

Verse 6 pulls it all together. Not merely the priests and Levites, nor just the congregation, but all living creatures are included in the choir of choirs. God has given each of us breath; we're called now to breathe His praise. This song begins and ends with the command to praise the Lord. We're to praise Him everywhere, with every means possible because of His mighty acts, and because of who He is. And, we're to praise Him with a wide variety of instrumentation and with triumphant expressions of worship. God desires for you and for me to live a lifestyle of spontaneous praise for the best instrument of praise is a man or woman, teenager, or child wholly committed to Him. We are to be a people of praise. There is nothing more majestic or more beautiful in the entire book of Psalms than this brief finale. Let's shout it out together, vigilant to not ever let it become just a cliché. Repeat it after me: "Praise the Lord!" Let's say it out loud three different times, emphasizing a different word each time.

#### 5) Application I can think of at least two applications from this psalm.

All of our faculties are to be engaged in praising God. The breath is used to blow the trumpet and flute; the fingers are used with the harp and strings; the whole hand hits the tambourine; the feet move in rhythm; and the arms are used to clash the cymbals together. Corporate worship is not meant to be passive as if it's something that we just watch or listen to. We are to be fully engaged in active worship, lifting our praise to God by engaging our head, our heart, and our hands.

The plurality and variety of instrumentation gives us freedom to worship God in different ways. There is not just one way to worship, or just one musical style that is acceptable to God. There is a diversity of musical preferences and interests here at NLBFC and that is a good thing, not a bad thing. Our challenge is not to prove which style of music or worship is "right," but rather to grant grace to those who may choose to worship in different ways than we do. The key is to create corporate worship experiences that allow for both rejoicing and reverence.

If you're at all like me, when you think about how expressive and free worship was in the Old Testament, it makes wish that we could be that free.

We often think of Christianity as a reserved religion, and of Jesus as someone who was serious and proper at all times.

#### PRAYERS

SONG: Lord of the Dance