

PRAISE

11 - Metamorphosis: The Way of Transformation
Church on the Park | Sunday, 07 NOV 2021 | Glen Gerhauser

Texts: “How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Selah.” (Ps 84:4, NASB). “After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: “Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever.” As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. The Ammonites and Moabites rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another” (2 Chron. 20:21-23), NIV).

Theme: Praise transforms the atmosphere, welcoming God’s heavenly Kingdom on earth.

Intro: Today, we will explore the subject of praise. According to Scripture, what is praise, and why is it so powerful? Near the end of the message, I want to share with you another vision the Lord gave him because it relates to this subject.

In the story of Jehoshaphat and his enemies, we discover what praise is and why it’s important. Jehoshaphat and the Jews came up with a bizarre strategy: to put the praisers at the head of the army. Worshippers and singers have no weapons. At least, that’s what we would think if we were looking only at the visible realm. God sees praise as his spearhead. Praise pioneers the path, preparing the way for God to march into the battlefield. As the people praise, the Lord sets ambushes against the multitude that had come to invade Judah. The enemy ended up destroying themselves. In the end, the Jews were ecstatic with joy at the abundance of spoils they claimed. They called the valley that almost annihilated them, the Valley of Blessing (Berakah בְּרַכָּה).

1) P - Pursue the Lord, prepare your heart and plant yourself (2 Chron. 20:1-19).

- One of the enemy’s age-old tactics is to push you out of the place the Lord has planted you.
 - This is what the Moabites and Ammonites were attempting to do.
 - The enemy comes to you like a pack of wolves, and he wants you to retreat and run.
 - How can you overcome this?
- Stress in our lives causes us to react rather than respond.
 - But God has a better way, and it’s responding with his wisdom.
 - When difficult situations come, we enter into the ‘fight or flight’ mode.
 - We either fight in the flesh or flee.
 - There’s a lot of fighting in the flesh and fleeing going on among God’s people.
 - But again, God has a better way.

- God's way is for us to fervently pursue him.
 - For Jehoshaphat and Judah, this meant that they fasted and sought the Lord.
 - And through this fasting and prayer, they received prophetic insight. We will come back to this later.
- The Jews fervent prayer caused them to plant themselves.
 - Over and over in this passage is the theme of standing. In other words, the Jews knew this land was their inheritance, and they firmly planted themselves. The enemy did not move them.
- Know where the Lord has planted you and pursue him.
 - Today, the church is running here and there. Sadly, we're like a chicken running around without a head.
 - Check out Mike the Headless Chicken. He lived 18 months without a head.
 - But it's time we reconnect with our head—Jesus—and not be moved.

2) R - Raise a voice of praise (2 Chron. 20:20-23).

- At this point, we see the Jews counterintuitive strategy.
 - They fight by praising God.
- What is praise?
 - The main Hebrew word is הָלַל (haLAL)
 - It means two specific things: 1) to shine and 2) to praise.
 - In the Hebrew mind, to praise is to cause God to shine on the earth. He shines in heaven, and by praising him, heaven shines on earth.
 - HaLAL further means to admire, exclaim and boast.
 - So when you're praising God, you are admiring and exclaiming him. You are revealing who he is. You are boasting in him rather than your own beauty or strength.
 - Praise shines the spotlight on God rather than yourself.
 - From halal, comes another famous Hebrew word: הַלְלוּ־יְהוָה
Hallelujah (Ps 106:1).
 - Hallelujah has two components.
 - The first is *halelu*.
 - This is the imperative of praise. In other words, it is exhorting yourself and others to praise.
 - It's a command to praise.
 - The second is *Yah*.
 - Yah is the contracted form of Yahweh. It's God's covenantal and personal name.
 - Hallelujah means to praise Yahweh. It means you are praising Yahweh, but it also means you are telling everyone and everything to praise Yahweh.
 - You are calling both the angels and demons to praise Yahweh.

- And of course, as you know, the demons hate praising God, so if you do it with a pure out, it causes the enemy to flee.
 - The devil hates the light.
 - It's because praise is like a light. It transforms the atmosphere around you and causes the enemy confusion.
 - When the enemy hears praise, it's like an ultrasonic sound wave causing him to tremble and run.
- Here's another vision the Lord gave me:
 - Then I looked, and I saw again people—people singing, dancing, laughing, and praising God.
 - I asked the Lord, "Who are these people?"
 - He said, "These are my people on earth. They are always praising me. My joy is within them, and that is their strength."
 - "This is how they fight their battles. They fight through praise."
 - "They are my remnant people. They know praise is more powerful than protest and that prayer is more powerful than petitions."
 - "These people, my people, look to me and me alone for their joy and strength."
 - "They are a faithful and loyal people. They are like Ruth rather than Orpah. 'Where you go, they will go; where you stay, they will stay.'"
 - "My people are those who seek my face, not the news for direction. I am their Shepherd, their guide and their comfort."
 - "What's happening on earth right now is all about my people. I am revealing hearts and separating the wheat from the chaff. And I know it's painful for my servants because you believe for the best for each one. But I must do this separating work. I did it at creation, and I did it through John the Baptist."
 - "Religion—man's religion—will not stand. It is like chaff that is blown away by the wind. Man's zeal will not bring about the righteousness I desire. Only the cross can do that."
 - "My Kingdom is the only thing that can stand in these end times."
 - As the Holy Spirit speaks to me, I feel deep peace and satisfaction. I feel at rest. I didn't feel like that before the Lord began opening my eyes.
 - Then I looked, and I saw people digging. They had shovels and picks. One jumped up, excited and exclaimed, 'I found gold!' Another leapt and said, 'I found water!' And yet another said, 'I found a lost soul—one locked in the rubble.'
 - The Lord said to me, "My people must come back to the Book and seek my ancient wisdom—the ancient ways that Jeremiah prophesied. There in the ancient ways—the eternal ways—is gold. Like Isaac, as they redig the wells, they will discover the water their spiritual fathers drank from. And as they seek, they will also find the lost souls: those trapped in the rubble of this world's chaos."

Conclusion: To be continued. Now let's practice praising the Lord.

ENDNOTES

HALAL

I הלל: Arb. halla to appear on the horizon, Vulg. to shine, hilāl, new moon → הִלֵּל; Tigr. Wb. 1b halhala blaze; with II → Palache 24.

pi: impf. יהליל (? hif) Sir 36/3327 **to cause to shine**. †
hif (: qal BL 428e; Beer-M. 2:79h): impf. יְהַלֵּל, תְּהַלֵּל, יְהַלֵּל, inf. יְהַלֵּל* >) בְּהַלֵּל BL 436, alt. < בְּהַלֵּל, BL 228a) Jb 29:3: —1. **to flash forth light** Is 13:10 (1QIsa יאירו, Kutscher Lang. Is. 164) Jb 41:10; —2. **to shine** (BL 294b) Jb 29:3 (with sffx. attached, Brockelmann Heb. Syn. §68b) 31:26; —Is 13:20 יְהַלֵּל* = יְהַלֵּל. †
Der. הִלֵּל, n.m. מְהַלֵּל (?), הִלֵּל.

II הלל: Ug. hll to cheer; JArm. only 1QGnAp 212, Syr. hallel to praise; Akk. alālu cry, song of people at work, Gt song of joy (elēlu) to sing, Š to cheer; Arb. halla II, IV to raise a cheer, halhala IV, VII dialect, to weep; Tigr. Wb. 21b hawlala to praise, 2b hīlal; orig. to trill, warble Littmann Volkspoesie 87.

pi: יהליל, תהליל, תהליל, תהליל; impf. יְהַלֵּל, תְּהַלֵּל, יְהַלֵּל (Sec. ααλλεα), אֶהְלֵל/לְהַלֵּל, אֶהְלֵל/לְהַלֵּל, יהליל(ו); impv. הִלֵּל, תְּהַלֵּל, הִלֵּל, pt. מְהַלֵּלִים; in MT ל followed by shwa always without dagesh forte (BL 220m), :: Sec. *εαλλεαεχ (Brönno 76) and Sept. and NT ἀλληλουια: —1. **to admire, eulogize: a beautiful woman** Gn 12:15, **a beautiful man** 2S 14:25, a person Pr 27:2 28:4, a man praises his wife 31:28, women praise a woman Song 6:9, works praise a woman Pr 31:31; the king 2C 23:12f; an impious man his desires Ps 10:3 (→ Comm.); abs. 63:6; —2. **to praise God**: a) death does it not Is 38:18; the Philistines their God Ju 16:24; b) **to praise** Y. Is 38:18 62:9 64:10 Jr 20:13 Ps 22:23f, 27 35:18 69:35 84:5 107:32 109:30 117:1 119:164 146:1f. 147:12 148:1-4, 7 150:1-5 Ezr 3:10 Neh 5:13; c) Y.'s name Jl 2:26 Ps 69:31 74:21 145:2 148:5, 13 149:3; —3. **הלל with יה**: a) 102:19 115:17 150:6; b) → יהליליה Ps 104:35-150:6; —4. יהלל ל'י: Ezr 3:11 1C 16:4, 36 23:5, 30 25:3 2C 20:19 29:30 30:21; —5. 1 יהלל לשם Ps 29:13; with דבר Ps 56:5, 11 (txt ?); —6. **to exclaim Halleluia** Ezr 3:11 1C 23:5 2C 5:13 7:6 8:14 20:21 29:30 31:2; —7. הלל abs. praise Jr 31:7; —Ps 44:9 rd. תהלילנו. †

pu: pf. הִלֵּל/הלו, impf. יְהַלֵּל, pt. 1— מְהַלֵּל. to be praised, בתולות Ps 78:63 (in wedding-songs rd. הילילו Sept. ?), city Ezk 26:17, a wise man Pr 12:8; —2. pt. to be praiseworthy (BL 278l): Ps 48:2 96:4 145:3 1C 16:25, his name Ps 113:3; —2S 22:4 / Ps 18:4 מְהַלֵּל rd. מְהַלֵּלִי (III הלל po. 2). †

hitp: impf. יְהַלֵּל/ללו, תְּהַלֵּל/ללו; impv. הִלֵּל, תְּהַלֵּל, תְּהַלֵּל, תְּהַלֵּל; inf. יְהַלֵּל, pt. מְהַלֵּלִים; 1— **to boast** a) 1K 20:11 Jr 49:4 cj. Ps 12:9 Pr 20:14 27:1; with ב on account of Jr 9:22f Ps 49:7 52:3 Pr 25:14; b) with 'י to make one's boast in the name of God Ps 105:3 1C 16:10 cj. Zech 10:12; abs. Ps 106:5; with ב of God Is 41:16 45:25 Jr 4:2 Ps 34:3 63:12 64:11 (sc. בְּאֵלֵי־יְהוָה) 97:7 (ב) cj. 44:9; —2. to be praised Pr 31:30. †

Der. הִלֵּל (?), מְהַלֵּל (?), הִלֵּל, תהלל, תהלל.

Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M. E. J., & Stamm, J. J. (1994–2000). The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament (electronic ed., p. 249). Leiden: E.J. Brill.

500 הָלַל (*hālal*) II, **praise, boast** (only in Piel, Pual and Hithpael). (ASV and RSV usually the same.)

Derivatives

- 500a הִלְלוּ (*hillûl*) **rejoicing, praise.**
500b מָהַלַּל (*mahālāl*) **praise.**
500c תְּהִלָּה (*tēhillā*) **praise.**

This root connotes being sincerely and deeply thankful for and/or satisfied in lauding a superior quality(ies) or great, great act(s) of the object. Synonyms are: *yādā* (Hiphil) “to praise,” “give thanks”; *rānan* “to sing or shout joyfully”; *šir* “to sing (praises)”; *bārak* (Piel) “to praise,” “bless”; *gādal* (Piel), “to magnify”; *rūm* (Polel), “to exalt”; *zāmar* (Piel), “to sing, play, praise”—all of which see. For cognates see Akkadian *alālu*. 1. *atlalu* “to shout, brag, boast;” 2. *sululu* “to hail, acclaim, utter a cry, to generally express joy” (CAD A.I., pp. 331ff.); and Ugaritic *hll* (UT 19: no. 769). Our root occurs 206 times.

This root can be used of exalting human beauty (Gen 12:15; II Sam 14:25) or human understanding (Prov 12:8). The noun *tēhillā* is used of the renown of cities (Jer 48:2). Also *hālal* can bespeak the praise given to a good homemaker (Prov 31:28, 31), a wise diplomat (I Kgs 20:11), which comes from a king (Ps 63:11 [H 12]), etc. However, our root usually refers to praising deity, even false deities (Jud 16:24).

The most frequent use of our root relates to praising the God of Israel. Nearly a third of such passages occur in the Psalms. The largest number of these are imperative summons to praise. The frequency and mood emphasizes the vital necessity of this action. The centrality of the cultus to Israel’s national *lan* further confirms that necessity, as does the fact that psalmody in Israel’s religion was so strongly linked to David the idyllic king. The themes surrounding and included in the verbal expressions of praise (the psalms) show that it is imperative that God in his deity (Ps 102:21 [H 22]) be recognized and that the fullness thereof be affirmed and stated. This is to be offered in an attitude of delight and rejoicing. Belief and joy are inextricably intertwined. Secondly, it is significant that most of these occurrences are plural (except Ps 146:1; Ps 147:12, collective). This shows us, as does the use of the psalms in the worship that praise of Jehovah was especially, though by no means uniquely (Ps 146:1), congregational. This praise could involve choirs and musical instruments, too. It could be expressed in speaking (Jer 31:7), singing (Ps 69:30 [H 31]), and with dancing (Ps 149:3). Such praise was an essential element of formal public worship. It is important to note the strong relationship between praise and intellectual content. The entire creation both terrestrial (Ps 148:1ff.) and heavenly (Ps 148:2) are summoned to praise God. This does not, however, imply that such activity was anything other than intelligent. Such personifications (Rom 8:20ff.) emphasize the responsibility of all creation to joyfully render to God his due (Ps 150:6). Praise and cultus are constants in man’s obligation and privilege before the Creator and Savior (Ps 106:1). Interestingly, during the Exile, public worship was sustained, but apart from the temple. In order to emphasize their diminished “joy” in worship the pious hung up their harps (Ps 137:2), and resumed playing in worship upon their restoration (Ps 147:7). Furthermore, the messianic age is to attest the singing of a new song (Isa 42:10; cf. Rev 5:9). The nt worshiping community came into the self-awareness that they were the temple of God (I Cor 3:16; see *hēkāl*). Temple worship is most joyful and expressed both in old and new songs.

Our verb is also used in the volutive sense whereby the pious declares his intention to praise God. These declarations are either at the beginning (Ps 145:2) or end (Ps 22:22 [H 23]) of a psalm, although usually *yādā* (Hiphil) is used in such psalms. Even the individual praise is in a cultic context (Ps 22:22 [H 23]; 35:18). *tēhillā* can also be used in such psalms (145:1; 9:14 [H 15]; 109:1). This individual affirmation exhibits acceptance of the imperative mood voiced in *hālal*. Here, too, the importance of that activity for life is emphasized by its sustained verbal expression (Ps 63:5 [H 6]; 34:2 [H 3]). To so publicly exalt God’s person (Deut 10:21; Jer 17:14) and work (Ps 106:2) is tantamount to an affirmation of life itself. The historical books (i.e. Chronicles) assume such a resolution and especially note the arrangement and establishment of the cultic order and ascribe the establishment of the musical worship to David.

Another use of our root reflects on the nature and content of praising God. He is the unique and sole object and the content of true praise (Ps 65:1 [H 2]; 147:1: cf. Jer 17:14). God is further and inseparably joined to praise (Ps 109:1; Deut 10:21; Ps 22:3 [H 4]). Moreover, human existence and praising the true God are closely related (Ps 119:175). Upon death this cultic public praise, of course, ceases (Ps 115:17; cf. *šē’ōl*, and L. Coppes “Sheol, What is It?” *Covenanter Witness* 92:14–17). The fullest richness of human life produces continual praise (Ps 84:4 [H 5]).

The profane connotation (in the sense of a laudable quality) is sometimes applied to God. This is especially expressed in the Hithpael and the noun *tēhillā*. One's only and continual boast (glorying) is to be in God (Ps 105:3). Indeed, if one is pious he will so glory in God (Ps 64:10 [H 11]); note its parallel *sāmah*). God's praise (paralleled by *hōd*) fills the earth (Hab 3:3). *tēhillā* is also parallel to *kābōd* (Isa 42:8) and God declares that he will not allow another to receive his due. Yet, God's praise is proclaimed (Isa 42:10), recounted (Ps 78:4), and ever increasing (Ps 71:14). His praise considered in this objective sense is closely tied to his historical acts of deliverance in behalf of his elect (Ex 15:1 I; Ps 78:4; 106:47) showing God's covenantal interest in and work in history. He is not simply abstract being-in-itself, nor transcendent (Job 38–41).

The prophets declare Israel to be the "glory" (*tēhillā*) of God when she is in a divinely exalted and blessed state (Isa 62:7; Jer 13:11). The prophets also summon the elect, indeed the whole world (Isa 61:11) to praise and rejoice over the promised salvation (Isa 43:21). The foreseen fulfillment (Isa 62:7) extends to the messianic state (Joel 2:26).

הִלּוּל (*hillūl*). **Festal jubilation.** ASV and RSV the same in Jud 9:27, but RSV is better in Lev 19:24. These joyous festivals of praise among Jews and Canaanites apparently took place upon the fourth year's harvest. This firstfruits' rite sanctified the vineyard or field with a sacrificial meal (KD, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, p. 366f.).

מְהִלָּל (*mahālāl*). **Praise.** ASV and RSV the same. This noun represents the degree of praise or lack thereof rendered to one by others (Prov 27:21, KD). It is that by which a man is tried and is likened to the crucible in which silver or gold is tried.

תְּהִלָּה (*tēhillā*). **Praise, praiseworthy deeds.** ASV and RSV similar. This noun represents the results of *hālal* as well as divine acts which merit that activity. This latter use occurs both in the singular (Ps 196:47) and plural (Ex 15:11; Ps 78:4). Parallel words are *kābōd* "honor" (Isa 42:8), and *šēm* "name" (Ps 48:10 [H 11]; Isa 48:9). Our word occurs fifty-seven times.

Bibliography: TDNT. VIII, 493–98. THAT, I, pp. 493–501.

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Coppes, L. J. (1999). [הלל 500](#). R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., pp. 217–218). Chicago: Moody Press.