

Psalm 147:1-20

“Praise ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; and praise is comely. The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of stars; he calleth them all by *their* names. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite. The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground. Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace *in* thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest wheat. He sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow. He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.”

Introduction

“Psalm 147, these last five, 146 through 150, each Psalm begins **“Praise ye the LORD,”** and ends with the same phrase, **“Praise ye the LORD,”** so these are the Hallelujah Psalms, Ya, God, Yahweh, Hallel, Praise, *Hallelujah*, it’s in the Hebrew if you see it, you translate it *“Praise ye the LORD.”* Each one of these Songs, these last five, opening and closing with that Hebrew phrase *Hallelujah*. This one Psalm, 147, speaks of God, his people, his sovereignty over nature, Psalm 148, speaks of all that should be praising him, Psalm 149 speaks of the fact that even in judgment God is all-wise, he is fair, he should be praised even in those things. And then the last Psalm, just everybody praises him, I think 13 times he uses the word Praise in this Psalm 150, which is shorter than the rest here.

Reasons To Praise The LORD

So it says this, it says **“Praise ye the LORD.”** The reason, three things, **“for it is good to sing praises unto our God;”** it is good to sing praises, so we’re going to see in these last Psalms I’m going to talk about this evening, that singing praises, when you have “to praise the LORD” it’s quite often coupled with the singing of those praises. **“Praise ye the LORD”** first, **“for it is good to sing praises unto our God;”** **“for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.” (verse 1)** it gives us three reasons. First of all, it is just good, I mean, we did a lot of dumb things in our lives, I don’t know about you, but there’s a long list behind me, washed in the blood, it’s gone now, I did a lot of stupid things. Praise the LORD, that’s a good thing, that we would come, we would praise his name. #2, It says **‘it’s good, and it says it’s pleasant.’** Again, there’s a lot of things in this world that are pleasant, that are not good, the pleasurable, the pleasure of sin for a season. [My niece just died of a drug overdose, so I know about that one.] There are a lot of things that are good that are not pleasant, root canals, sometimes it’s a good thing, but it’s not pleasant, you know. Ah, this is good and pleasant, #3, and it says that **‘it is comely.’** Interesting, it **‘lovely, fitting,’** but again the Hebrew words have a verb root, it’s from the root that means **“to be at home.”** So it tells us, you know, we come here [to church], cold night, crazy world, watching the news, we get together, come into this place, we start to sing his praises, and it’s good. A lot of bad news going on out there, so singing God’s praises is kind of a good thing. We’re not worried about anything being deflated here, we’re not worried about war or anything, it’s good, and it’s pleasant. It is a pleasant thing. And it says, the other feature of it, **it’s kind of like being at home.** We grow as Christians, and I think the whole time we grow as Christians, we think to ourselves *‘You know, I need to read more,’* you think that as a Christian, *‘I need to read the Word more.’* Some of you think that, I think you do, but I think you do, and you think *‘I need to pray more,’* and what we’re really saying is, **‘I want to be home, I want to be home.’** This is not where I’m made to be, I want to be in his presence. And it says here, **“Praise ye the LORD”** because to sing praises to him, first it’s good, and it’s pleasant, and it’s kind of like being at home, it’s kind of like being home. You know, we get away from everything else going on in the world, and we come here...more than us singing, how wonderful, of course I’m gettin’ old...

God Gathers His People, Heals The Broken-hearted

It says **“The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.” (verse 2)** Everybody else can say what needs to happen, what the solution is in the Middle East, it says here the LORD is the one whose gathered his people, he’s the one who gathers the outcasts of Israel. If you don’t like that, your argument is with him. **‘He gathers the outcasts of Israel,’ “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” (verse 3)** Certainly, in context to Israel, but God is the same with his Church, whatever age the Church is in, the same with us. And interestingly enough, **‘He gathers the outcasts,’** it says in another place **‘He puts the solitary in flocks,’** here we are, we have a family, we have a bigger family, to me a wonderful family. It says that **“He healeth the broken in heart,” ‘he heals the broken heart, and he binds up their wounds,’** in the context of the broken heart, there are wounds that can take place internally that are very deep, very painful, and they’re not seen by the naked eye. But God knows, it says he binds up the broken hearted, he bindeth up their wounds. [Comment: I was married for 19 years, and then my wife deserted me, forced a divorce on me. That wound runs deep, and hasn’t gone away yet, and when something threatens a close friendship I have, my PTSD trips into action, the wound opens up, and I start tripping out, sometimes seriously. A boy I love very much, a 10-year-old, has a deep wound from when his parents would yell and scream at each other, from age 3 to 6, before their divorce [the dad was physically abusive]. His PTSD trips out when he is near people who are yelling and screaming at each other. This is real, those wounds go deep, and we now call it Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Many soldiers come home, having suffered no physical wounds, but are severely wounded inside, they have this PTSD. Anything that seriously emotionally wounds us causes PTSD, not just warfare and battle. God can heal it if he chooses to do so, but he doesn’t always, some of us have to endure it. Louis Zamperini, whose WWII biography is told in the book ***Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*** tells of this man’s severe PTSD caused by living for two years in a Japanese Concentration camp, and then of his miraculous healing, which prevented him from drinking himself to death. God healed him and called him to faith all in one-fell-swoop, all at once.]

He Knows The Number Of Stars, Calls Them All By Name

And then it says this, **“He telleth”** or counts **“the number of stars; he calleth them all by their names.” (verse 4)** Notice this

word, “all”, and that’s what the Hebrew says, **“all by their names.”** **‘He counts, or he takes inventory, or he knows the number of stars.’** Scientists today, Dr. Morris in his commentary in the Psalms, a scientist, he’s gone on to be with the Lord recently, said, *‘Last count, scientists are figuring, astronomers, that there are 10 to 25th power stars in the heaven.’* the number 10 with 25 zeroes after it. He said *‘10 to the 25th power stars.’* He said, *‘If you would name a star, if you would name three stars per second, it says he knows them all by name, if you named three stars per second, to name 10 to the 25th power stars would take 10 billion, billion years, 10 billion times a billion years to name 10 to the 25th stars if you’re naming three per second.’* Which means, of course, if you know what it means—You know what it means? I means he named them all at once. He’s omnipotent, he’s omniscient. He named them all at once. And it says **‘He knows all of their names.’** You know, you can get one of these organizations to come to you, and they’ll name a star after you. You might as well buy a bridge, you want to buy the Brooklyn Bridge? Send us so much money, and we’re gonna name a star after you. First of all, they all have names already, it says right here, so all of that’s wrong anyhow...the important thing here for us to note is this, look, the heavens, it says he lays out the heavens with the span of his hand. **‘He knows the number of the stars, and he calleth them all by their names, Buddy, Paul, Suzie come over here.’** He knows them all by their names, this God, whose understanding, in his wisdom and his knowledge, is unfathomable, bends down to our broken hearts, verse before this, and he binds them up. Why verse 4 is so phenomenal is because in verse 3 it says he’s the one that stoops down to our hearts, the one who knows the names of all of the stars in heaven, all of them.

His Understanding Is Infinite, And Yet We Question Him

“Great is our LORD, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.” (verse 5) that’s the only way he could know the names of all the stars. And yet we question him, I question him. There isn’t anything he doesn’t know in the entire universe, he knows the names of all the stars, he cares about my individual heart, he bends down to bind it up, and yet I do this *‘You sure Lord? You want me to do that? Are you sure?’* You know, it’s like Ananias said to the Lord, there’s this guy there named Paul, he said *‘Lord, have you heard about this guy?’* like, you know. Isn’t it interesting, he’s laying this out in context of the human nature, this infinite God, that he cares about us, his understanding is infinite, and yet we question him. **“The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth**

the wicked down to the ground.” (verse 6) you don’t have to worry, he’s going to make it all right.

God Oversees The Entire Ecosystem

“Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.” (verses 7-8) “Sing praise” that’s going to be important in these last Psalms, because singing and praise are often one and the same, as we go through, **“sing praise upon the harp unto our God:”** the last Psalm is going to say “the cymbal, the harp, the psaltery” he’s going to go through all of those. So praise certainly is musical and it’s in song many times. **“sing praise unto our God: who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.”** God in his wisdom, the ecosystem, 1.5 trillion tons of rain fall every day on the face of the earth. Just what takes place. **“He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.” (verse 9)** he oversees all of this.

God Delights In Those Who Reverence Him

And it says and yet **“He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of man.” (verse 10)** natural strength, God, he’s not impressed with the battle-horse, that was the tank in that day, the chariot. It says **‘he doesn’t delight in the strength of the horse, he takes not pleasure in the legs of man,’** the idea is your loins, where your strength is. Look at this, **“The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.” (verse 11)** How do we please the LORD? This God who knows the name of all the stars in the heavens, whose understanding is infinite, beyond what we can ever or will it. If it’s infinite, even in heaven [the kingdom of heaven, which will end up on earth, cf. Revelation 21] we will always be arriving, approaching it, and never arriving to a full understanding of his understanding, because it’s infinite. What can we do to please him? It says **‘he doesn’t delight in the strength of the horse, you know, human beings, we always gauge things so differently, he doesn’t take any pleasure in the legs of man,’** **“The LORD taketh pleasure”** number one, **“in them that fear him,”** and **“in those that hope in his mercy.” (verse 11)** that’s the heart of God, this infinite God, you know, he lays out the heaven with the span of his hand. It says, it’s not natural strength, it’s not the thing that you and I might think, it says **‘it’s**

spiritual strength that brings the light to his heart.’ When he sees his people fearing him. This is not a torturous agonizing fear, it’s a reverence, those who fear him, and those who hope in his mercy, it gives the light to the heart of this God that knows the names of 10 to the 25th stars across the heavens, we can give delight to. You don’t think that, you get up in the morning, you’re having a bad day, you’ve done something wrong, *‘I want to please you, I’m sorry, I mess up,’* because there’s a reverence, there’s a fear of God, and there’s a hope in his mercy. It says when that’s going on, there’s delight in his heart, he delights in it.

Three Things About God’s Word

“Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. for he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace *in* thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. He sendeth forth his commandment *upon* the earth: his word runneth very swiftly.” (verses 12-15) We’re going to hear three things about his Word now, **“his word runneth very swiftly”** one translator says **“his word quickly obeys him, quickly accomplishes,”** *Isaiah 55* says **‘his word never returns void, it accomplishes what he sends it out to do.’** And it says here it’s like this, **“runneth very swiftly.”** Then it says, **“He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.”** (verse 16) he says to Job, he’s kind of reproving Job at the end, after he starts griping and complaining, **‘Job, you see the treasure houses of snow, or of hail I’ve stored up for the last day?’** *‘O Lord, what about Global Warming, what do you mean you’ve stored up snow for the last day,’* he’s got something mixed up there. It says **“He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.”** (verse 16) the frost, the way he describes it, **“He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?”** (verse 17) you can shut everything down with a little bit of an ice-storm. And then it says this, **“He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow. He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.”** (verses 18-19) I kind of love this, the Psalmist is saying his Word is swift, it accomplishes what he sends it forth to do. Even, we look at the human heart, he says he binds up the heart, he works on it, **‘even the coldest heart, it says here, he sends out his Word, it melts, it has a power to soften and to warm.’** God’s Word has the power to soften and to warm. *‘I feel so far away, I’ve been backslidden, I feel like, I’m afraid, it’s like I don’t even care,’* get alone with your Bible somewhere, don’t come back

till you're warmed up, it's easy. **"He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow,"** those that are born in the Spirit, **"and the waters to flow."** (verse 18) **"He sheweth his word unto Jacob"** the conniver, and **"his statutes and his judgments unto Israel."** wonderfully, **"He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD."** (verses 19-20) his own chosen people he sets apart. The nations of the world, ***hallelujah, praise ye the LORD.*** Speaking about his own people, wonderfully, certainly it overlaps unto us.

Psalm 148:1-14

"Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word: mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven. He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD."

Introduction: Creation, He Created It, He Sustains It

"Now Psalm 148, begins with **"Hallelujah,"** ends with **"Hallelujah, praise ye the LORD, praise ye the LORD."** As we look at this, look, first six verses are descending. It starts in the heights, you'll see in the end of verse 1 there, and it comes down, and down and down and down. And then in verse 7 it's ascending, his praise, it starts with the dragons, with the deeps, and it comes up to mankind. So it's interesting to watch the process here. **"Praise ye the LORD, Hallelujah. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens:"** that's where we start, **"praise him in the heights."** (verse 1) we're starting there, in the heavens. So, praises in the heavens, look what it says, **"Praise ye him, all his angels: praise**

ye him, all his hosts.” (verse 2) heavenly hosts, all of the angels, **“Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.” (verse 3)** at the 10 to 25th power, **“Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.” (verse 4)** separating the firmament below the heavens from the firmament above the heavens, **“Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.” (verses 5-6)** and it says why this descending praise, from the highest orders and so forth, down. There are two reasons here, it says ***‘Praise his name, #1, for he commanded and they were created, #2, he hath also established them for ever and ever, he hath made a decree which shall not pass.’*** So he is Creator and Sustainer. You know, I love that about the Word of God, he inspired it, and he’s preserved it. What you hold in your hands, you have to wonder, people say *‘Your translation’s not accurate, they have translation problems, manuscripts,’* no, that’s nonsense, what you hold in your hand, if you have a translation, now there are paraphrases that are not translations, ok. But if you have a translation, NIV, some dynamic equivalents there, but they held on there [there is a difference of opinion there, because many modern translations, from the RSV onward were influenced by two very liberal Bible scholars named Wesley and Hort, and some believe their influence in their translations attempt to water down the actual Word, which is why many prefer to stick with the King James translation, or some of the modern Messianic Jewish translations such as Stern’s, which are incredibly accurate.] King James, New King James [New King James in the NT was influenced by Wesley and Hort. You might want to check out these books, “Let’s Weigh the Evidence” by Barry Burton, “Answers to your Bible Version Questions” by David W. Daniels, and “Which Version Is The Bible?” by Floyd Nolen Jones. For some reason, and I think it is because he feels it probably is the most accurate of translations, Pastor Joe exclusively uses the 1611 King James Translation, I don’t know, I haven’t asked him, but I’d bet that is the reason.] American Standard Version [also influenced by Wesley and Hort], if you have a translation, you have over 95 percent exactness in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts that they came from, you have God’s Word. You think he was smart enough to inspire it but not smart enough to take care of it? *‘I gave it to them perfect and they messed it all up, and now they don’t have it anymore?’* You know, when you get a chance, Google “Robert Dick Wilson,” I believe one of the greatest geniuses in regards to language in the Church, he lived first half of the last century, taught at Princeton. But he had complete command of 46 ancient Semitic languages. He had the

New Testament memorized in 7 different languages. He took the entire Old Testament by consonant, this is no vowels, and broke it down, I don't know how many million figures, did the whole thing, and he said, "What you have in your hand," he said, because he studied monuments and archeology, engravings, all this stuff, he said "The libraries in Alexandria are so messed up, they have the Pharaohs names wrong, he said you go to Babylon, the Babylonian's inscriptions are all messed up." He said "The one place where you find everything in right chronological order, right names, everything, is in the Bible," and he says "here's how many kings are mentioned, all correct, here's how many time tables, they're all correct," he says "What you have in your hand..." and that's why I love Robert Dick Wilson, he wouldn't have ever hung out with me. Because my IQ is here, and his is off the charts, but he believes in the same Book I hold in my hand, that tells me that I can have complete confidence in it. God here, he says, the same thing with Creation, he created it, he sustains it. I believe it's the same with his Word. It says we should praise his name, **"for he commanded, and they were created." (verse 5b) "He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass." (verse 6)** the things he has put in order.

Praising the LORD From The Bottom Of Creation To The Top Of Creation

Now from the lower places upward we should praise him. **"Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:" (verse 7)** "dragons" can be sea monsters, leviathan, whales, you know, who knows what's living in the Loch Ness and the deeper parts of the oceans. I have books on biological anomalies because I'm crazy and I love that kind of stuff, I have a whole section on sea serpents and sea monsters, all through the centuries, Captain's Logs, all the way up through the first and second World War, German Captains, American Captains, seeing 600-foot long things in the water, firing their guns at them, just fascinating. So who knows what's out there, we don't have a lot down that way, we think we're smarter than them. **"Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:"** so this last weekend something was fulfilled, **"mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:"** and then he gets to us, these are all the people that should praise the LORD **"kings of the earth,"** Netanyahu, Obama, Putin, big now, they ain't big in the future, I read their names in the news, I haven't read them in the Book of Revelation. It says here "kings" those in

charge, they should praise the LORD. But you and I can't sit here and say 'Yea,' because the next thing it says **"and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:"** "young men" that's a big category, because most of us in our 50s still consider ourselves young men, so it's a big category there, kind of takes everybody in, they should praise the LORD.

Why Should We Praise The LORD?

Why, it says here, here's his reasons, **"Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven." (verses 7-13)** he has praised him from both directions, from the top down, from the bottom up, and he says the reason that all humans, and he sums up there, should praise him, is because his name alone is excellent, I don't know another name alone like Jesus [Yeshua in Hebrew], I don't know if you do, **"his glory is above the earth and heaven."** and **"He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD, Hallelujah." (verses 13b-14)** "the horn" the authority "of his people, praise him for his name and for his choosing. Ephesians 1 told us **'We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world,'** that'll keep you busy [trying to figure that one out] for the rest of your life. **"the praise of all his saints, even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD."**

Do Angels Sing?

Now just as a little aside here, in **verse 2** where it says **"praise ye him, all his angels:"** I was thinking about this, because we just went through Christmas again, and in Luke chapter 2 it says the angels said **'Glory to God in the highest, on earth good will to men, and suddenly there appeared a multitude of heavenly host saying,'** so then you have these guys saying "See, it doesn't say singing, angels don't sing, you don't find angels singing, angels are only "saying". First of all, I think, why do you even have to do that? Are you a mean guy or something, you're some kind of expert God sent to bum people out? I like the idea of angels singing, personally. They say *'No, no, it doesn't say that, praising God and saying, it doesn't say praising God and singing.'* Well first of all, the word "praising" there in the root of it, in it's context, is used in the liturgical and hymnology also, so it can mean that. It doesn't say they were singing, but it doesn't say that they're not.

That's the important thing. So you can live on earth and be happy that when you get to heaven there's not going to be any angels singing, and I'm going to live on earth [where the kingdom of God is going to end up being, btw, cf. Revelation 21] and be happy that when I get there, there will be angels singing. Take your own shot at it here. One scholar I read said *"At the same time, we don't want to be guilty of going too far in the other direction. Just because the Bible doesn't explicitly state that they did sing, does not necessarily mean that they did not. Some have even argued that angels do not or cannot sing at all. But those who make this claim must adequately address Job 38:7 and other passages that seem to support the idea that they can and have sung. Furthermore there is no biblical or logical reason why they could not sing. Angels are highly intelligent beings who are capable of speaking. Why would they be incapable of putting those words into songs, especially since other beings in heaven sing."* (cf. Revelation 5:9-10) So, whoever wants to make up that rule is kind of foolish. Job 38:7 says, it says, God's challenging Job, **'Were you there when this happened? Were you there when this happened? Were you there when I laid the foundations of the earth, or when I measured out this and that,'** and he says **'when the morning stars'** an allusion to angels **'sang for together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy,'** the bar-elohim is the phrase in the Old Testament Hebrew. **'Were you there when they were singing?'** he says. Interesting, in **Isaiah chapter 6**, you don't have to turn, it says **'In the year king Uzziah died, I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, his train filled the Temple. Above it stood the seraphim, each one had six wings, with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly, and one cried unto another and said Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.'** This is what Kiel and Deledge, two of the most respected Hebrew scholars in recent Church history, they said *"Isaiah 6:3, 'And one cried to the other and said "Holy, Holy, Holy is Jehovah of hosts, filling the whole earth is his glory." The meaning is not they all lifted up their voice in concert at one and the same time, just as in Psalm 42:8, "El" is not used in this sense. But what there was, was a continuous and unbroken and epiphanal song, one...commenced and the others responded, repeating the 'Holy, Holy,' or following with 'Filling the whole earth with his glory.'* You can go to Kiel and Deledge's commentary on Isaiah and they say this is by the grammar structure an antithetical song, and it's seraphim singing here. So I'm sure if seraphim sing, angels sing. Also, I'm not done, I want angels to sing. Alfred Edersheim, if you read his commentary, who was a rabbi, and he came to faith, in *"The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah"*, one of his appendixes

in the back is on Jewish angelology, and he quotes in there Hebrew scholars saying they believed that angels sang, it was common belief in the day of Jesus that the angels sang. Here it says **“Praise ye him, all his angels”** you’ll notice over in **147:1**, it says **“to sing praises”** As we go through the rest of the Psalms this evening, it’s the same word, but we’re going to hear that they should “sing praises.” The interesting thing is in Chronicles when it’s talking about the order in the Levites and so forth, it uses this same phrase. Here in **Psalm 148**, it says **“Praise ye”** that specific phrase in the Hebrew **“him, all his angels.”** In **2nd Chronicles 23, verse 13**, it says, **‘And she looked, and behold the king stood at his pillar, at the entering in and the princes and the trumpets by the king, all the people of the land rejoicing, they sounded with trumpets, all the singers with instruments of music, and such as taught,’** here’s our word **‘to sing praises,’** it says **‘praise ye him, all ye angels,’** here the same phrase is translated **‘taught to sing praise.’** And again, in **2nd Chronicles 29**, twice in verse 30, **‘Moreover Hezekiah the king and princes commanded the Levites to sing praise,’** translated **‘praise ye’** here in 148, **‘all his angels.’** **‘To sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the Seer, and they sang praises,’** same word, same phrase, **‘with gladness, and they bowed their heads and they worshipped.’** So, you can believe whatever you want to believe. If you’re bummed out about angels not singing, I’ll pray for you. But you can’t prove Biblically that angels don’t sing. But look, if you torture the Scripture long enough you can get it to confess to anything, really. But you can’t do a legitimate scholarly study of language and prove in the Bible that angels don’t sing. In fact, the indication is in the other direction, they do, and I don’t know, why anybody wouldn’t want them to. Is there anybody here that doesn’t want the angels to sing? Got a thing against angels, you just need to shut up when you get there, or something. Ah, I don’t feel that way.

Psalm 149:1-9

“Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; to execute

vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.”

“Psalm 149, **“Praise ye the LORD.”** there it is, and it ends with **“Praise ye the LORD, Hallelujah.”** Notice this, **“Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.” (verse 1)** so it’s telling us to sing, again, his praises in the congregation of the saints. We’re going to hear about the saints three times here in this Psalm, **“Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.” (verses 2-3)** so again, they’re singing praises. **“For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” (verses 4-5)** The song kind of breaks in 5 and 6 into the next portion, **“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.” (verses 5-9)**

Sing A New Song To The LORD

So, **Hallelujah**, it begins this song, it says, **“Sing unto the LORD a new song,”** that’s the last of six times in the Book of Psalms we hear about “a new song.” I like it when we learn a new song here in the sanctuary. I sometimes don’t like the learning process, because it takes awhile for everybody to get up to speed, but if it’s a good song, it’s wonderful to watch it evolve and see the congregation embrace it. You know, some of them are good, some of them are not. And you know, the funny thing is, sometimes we can come here, can’t we, and we sing a familiar song, a song we sang for the last five years, and because we went through one of the most difficult seasons in our life, all of a sudden that song is saying things it never said to us before, and it becomes a new song, one that was very familiar. **“Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song,”** isn’t it funny, how that can happen to an old song, and can be brand new in our hearts, **“and his praise in the congregation of saints.” (verse 1)** So we’re told to sing, corporately, we come together, in the congregation of the saints,

that's you and I, we're saints. **“Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.” (verse 2)** God's plan for the nation of Israel [Comment: and that includes all 12 tribes at his 2nd coming, and most of those tribes have become nations of their own. I know of one tribe that can be conclusively identified as being one of the tribes of Israel that is a nation now, and not Jewish. The founding tribe of Ireland is called Tuatha de Danaan in Gaelic, and that is precisely translated “Tribe of Dan.” The tribe of Dan is most definitely one of the 10 lost tribes of Israel. So there are 9 others which historians haven't been able to identify, but God knows who and where they are.]

Spiritual Dancing In The Church, What About It?

“Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.” (verse 3) so, let them praise him in the dance, some people take that further than I like to take it [i.e. Pentecostals dancing around the church during services, kind of whacky, but it's their thing.] I think it's a wonderful thing, in the Kingdom Age we'll understand where the parameters of that idea are. [Messianic Jewish and Jewish worshippers in synagogues in Israel probably understand more about where the parameters of that are.] I know sometimes it can be distracting. But years ago, when the church was young [the Calvary Chapels], I remember I was, it was one of those nights, you're in the catering hall, you move up and down, there's a dog that wandered in, it's not the environment where you thought *‘This is a great environment to plant a church in,’* we would never do it that way now. But on one of those nights, somebody had come from another church, and decided during the worship, that God told him to dance. So all of a sudden he shoots up one aisle, he shoots up another, you know, he's dancing, and I see Tom and one of the other guys chasing him. And the more they chase him, the faster he dances, we called him dancing Danny. We finally caught him, and he said *‘Well the Lord told me to dance.’* We said, *‘Ya he did, but not here, he told you to dance somewhere else.’* Because what happens is, sometimes, when we're worshipping, the Spirit moves, and the whole congregation stands, hands are up, people are moving, that's wonderful. But sometimes one person stands up, and they're doing their thing, you know. And then people are no longer concentrating on the Lord to sing his praises, they're watching this one person, who really can't dance. Not that the Lord sees it that way, he loves it. But you watch the worship, you see what worship is supposed to be, you go to Revelation chapter 4 and 5, and you look at the worship in heaven, it's all ordered.

They say this, and they all fall down, throw their crowns, it's very ordered, it isn't out of order, God is a God of order. It tells us when we use the spiritual gifts, that everything should be done decently and in order. You're watching in heaven, you have the four Cherubim, each of them have the four faces, everybody's worshipping, everybody says this, somebody doesn't go "Amen!" and they all turn around and look at him, like, you know. But everything happens in order. So, ya, I think there's a beautiful expression, and you can see when there's unity when the Holy Spirit moves and everybody stands...but sometimes somebody kind of showboats a little bit, it detracts from Jesus Christ, because they become the center of attention. So we have them, we try to talk to them, tell them to calm down. So that's spiritual dance. Besides that, what about carnal dancing? What about it? Can Christians dance? Some can, some can't. It's always a deal around here. We don't sponsor dances. People get mad at us, they get mad. Look, it's not the church's business, I don't find it anywhere in the New Testament where the Church sponsors dances. I'm not against it, I think it's fine for a husband to go out dancing with his wife. But it isn't our job to put teenagers whose hormones are raging hip to hip in the name of Jesus, and let them do whatever they do these days. I don't know. So, I think spiritual dancing is wonderful, I've been to Israel 22, 23 times, I've seen interpretive dancing, it's beautiful in Israel, I think there's a right way to do that [and the Israelis seem to know how to do it], I think there's a wrong way to do that. Dancing is for heaven [kingdom of heaven]. So, do angels dance? I don't know anything about that [laughter] I know they sing, I don't know if they dance. **"praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp."** (verse 3) you know, Miriam and the women when they crossed the Red Sea, they all took the timbrel and they sang the song of Moses, you know, **'the horse and rider hath he thrown into the sea,'** the great song of victory no doubt, there was movement to that.

The Saints In Glory Are To Judge The World

It says **"For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation."** (verse 4) Isn't that beautiful news, isn't it? Now, **"Let the saints be joyful"** notice this **"in glory:"** now everybody tries to make that Jerusalem, the Jews returned from the Babylonian Captivity. That's bologna, Israel [Judah] wasn't in glory when they came back from the Babylonian Captivity. You had the Minor Prophets rebuking them and challenging them [to rebuild the Temple]. **"Let the saints be**

joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” (verse 4) this is in glory, I like this, we have beds in glory. Finally gonna have enough time to take a nap, and you’re not going to need to. So, one author I read said *“In glory a bed is a place of solitude and thinking, it isn’t a place of snoring,”* it’s much different you know.

“Let the saints be joyful in glory” these are pre-trib saints [now depending upon your eschatological interpretation, it could be pre-trib, mid-trib, post-trib. I interpret this to mean any saint who has been a part of the 1st Resurrection to Immortality and is immortal, with an immortal body, living in the Kingdom of God after the 2nd coming of Yeshua haMeschiach, Jesus Christ. That is all-inclusive, the resurrected saints, going all the way back to righteous Abel, to the resurrection of the two witnesses in Revelation just before the 2nd coming at the 7th Trumpet.] **“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;” (verse 6)** So interesting to read the Hebrew scholars, yes, the Word of God is like a twoedged sword, but don’t let anybody take the literal interpretation of what these things are saying away from the Church. Because, in ***Psalms 146, 147, 148, praise him in Israel, praise him in his creation, praise him with the angels above, praise him in the deeps, and now it’s even praise him in his judgment.*** In ***Revelation 16*** it finally says, when the vials are poured out, it says ***‘You are faithful, you’re true, you’re just for doing this,’*** it is not happening in any unjust way. And sadly, there will be judgment, it’s going to happen. The wonderful thing now is we can share the love of Christ with people, they can turn and get saved, just like the rest of us, sinners saved by grace, and enter into a relationship with the Lord. ***“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.” (verses 6-9)*** “the judgment written” read ***Revelation chapter 19, verses 11 to 19.*** “this honour” it says, “have all his saints, hallelujah” Revelation 19, let me turn there, all the way to the right. It says ***“And I saw the heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”*** we’re told earlier in the chapter the fine linen is the

righteousness of the saints, white and clean. **“Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.”** (Revelation 19:11-19) Complete rebellion, God being completely just as he comes. **“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,”** the saints in glory, before they descend with him, **“and a twoedged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen [nations], and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains,”** is just what it said in Revelation, **“and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.”** (verses 6-9) “this honour,” imagine that, through the heavens, on white horses, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the sun refuses to shine, the moon doesn’t give it’s light. The stars of heaven go out, God won’t share glory with anyone, no other heavenly body gets to have any glory but his Son, and it says on his head the royal diadems are sparkling and shining, all other light has gone out, and here comes the Lord of lord and King of kings, with you and I behind him, on white horses [and those white horses are spirit horses, composed of spirit horse-flesh, more powerful and strong than physical matter]. **“this honour have all his saints. Hallelujah, Hallelujah!”** The last one says this,

Psalm 150:1-6

“Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

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

We’re Told Where To Praise Him, Why To Praise Him, And How To Praise Him

So, interesting picture brought before us. Israel’s instrumentation in their ordered worship of God, had three groups of instruments, wind instruments, stringed instruments and percussive instruments, they’re named here. This tells where we’re to praise him, why we’re to praise him, how we’re to praise him, and whose to praise him. That’s how it breaks it right down. Look, **“Praise ye the LORD, Hallelujah. Praise God”** it says, first of all **“in his sanctuary.”** We did that tonight. Right? We’re going to do that when I’m done this little Psalm. Right? Are you guys going to do it? Don’t dance, sing, along with the angels. **“Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.” (verse 1)** again, that’s where the angels are singing. So where do we praise him? Heaven and earth, in the sanctuary, great thing to come together and worship and praise the LORD. Then it says why we should praise him. **“Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.” (verse 2)** we know the history of them, we have the Word of God, and there’s still many of the mightiest acts of the Lord ahead of us. **“and praise him according to his excellent greatness.”** It isn’t just that he’s great, his greatness has excellence attached to it. It’s not great like Alexander the Great or Napoleon, he has excellence attached to his greatness, that’s why we’re supposed to do it. This is how we’re supposed to do it, and obviously all of his praise is musical, **“Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.” (verse 3)** if you have a gloss there, probably your translation maybe identify these instruments a little more closely. **“the psaltery and harp” ‘kinerot’** the Sea of Galilee, Kineseret, from the Hebrew *“Kinerot”* which is “harp.” You look at the Sea of Galilee on a map it’s shaped like a harp, so it’s called *Kinerot, Geneseret, the Sea of Galilee*. You have the kinerot here, the psaltery and the harp, through the main stringed instruments throughout the history of Israel. **“Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.” (verse 4)** your translation might say “with the timbrel and the pipe” that gives you extra things to think about. **“praise him with the stringed instruments and the organs.” “Praise him with the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.” (verse 5)** your translation might say “the clashing cymbals.” So it says where we’re supposed to praise him,

in the sanctuary, and in the firmament. It tells us why we're supposed to praise him, because of his mighty acts and the excellence of his greatness. It tells us how we're supposed to praise him. I'm so thankful we have a musical faith. I don't know about you guys, isn't it interesting, if you study world religions, you listen to, you know, some of the other quote, unquote music that goes with other religious systems around the world, when you listen to some of that, it makes me *really happy* I'm a Christian. Because we genuinely, and so did Israel have a musical faith, and I really do appreciate that. **"Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the clashing cymbals."** (verse 5) Whose supposed to do it? **"Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD."** (verse 6) "every thing that hath breath," that's you guys. Right? You don't think of yourself as "every thing" quite often, but you're in a big category here. "Let every thing, every person, every being, every creature, the creation groaning and travailing, Paul tells us in Romans 8, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. Whose supposed to do it? **"Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Hallelujah."** I like that idea, it is good. So, let's have the musicians come, and we'll end with a song or two, and sing with the angels, and the LORD our God, let's stand. You know, it's funny, Mike McIntosh, it's funny, over the years, like we've had somebody in the old building, we started worship, started worshipping, and I saw somebody reach under their seat, when somebody reaches under their seat you always watch, and he opened up this case, and he got out a trumpet and he got ready to go, and the ushers grabbed him, once somebody got out a flute and just started their own section, and you have to talk to them and say, and then they're offended because *'you're grieving the Spirit'* because you won't let them play a trumpet while you're in the worship. So, Mike McIntosh, what he used to do, once a year, he just told everybody in the church, everybody bring your trumpets, everybody bring your kazoos, everybody bring your harmonicas, everybody bring your guitars, whatever you think you can play and you've been stunted by not being allowed to play in church, you bring your dancing, you bring your instruments, we're going to gather tonight, we're going to take the first ten minutes to try to get everybody tuned, and he said they'd do it one night a year and get it out of everybody's system. So, and Chuck Smith used to say *"That's great, for Mike."* [laughter] But we all have this instrument, every thing that hath breath, right here. Somehow I think, me personally, there isn't anything like hearing a multitude of human voices, there's no instrument like that. As Brain gets tuned, let's bow our hearts, let's pray, and then lets lift our voices...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Psalms 147:1-20; Psalm

148:1-14; Psalm 149:1-9 and Psalm 150:1-6, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]