

## Another Level of Praise

### Psalm 149

*"Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful. O Israel, rejoice in your Maker. O people of Jerusalem, exult in your King. Praise his name with dancing, accompanied by tambourine and harp. For the Lord delights in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. Let the faithful rejoice that he honors them. Let them sing for joy as they lie on their beds. Let the praises of God be in their mouths, and a sharp sword in their hands—to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with shackles and their leaders with iron chains, to execute the judgment written against them. This is the glorious privilege of his faithful ones. Praise the Lord!"*

Some Bible translations title Psalm 149 "The Lord Delights in His people." To lift our bands and simply say His name is music to God's ears. At the end of many of the Psalms, we see the verse "Praise the Lord!" It's almost a command. In the Old Testament there were two meanings to the word praise - *halal*, meaning to boast with words and singing, and *shabach*, meaning to soothe or pacify with words.

### Seven Signs Of The Highest Praise:

1. **The Kind of Praise with no Inhibitions** (v.1-2) – Seven verses in Psalm 149 start with the word "let." We must "let it out" when praise rises within us, or it will remain smothered and eventually go stale. Jesus stated, "If these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40) Roosters have to crow, and believers have to praise.
2. **The Kind of Praise to give the Lord Pleasure** (v4) – We enjoy watching our children play and laugh? God enjoys watching us laugh in the spirit, sing in the spirit, and leap for joy! When we no longer care what others think about the way we praise, then we are truly giving God great pleasure!
3. **The Kind of Praise that comes from Lowly Circumstances** (v4) – It is easy to praise the Lord when we live comfortably, but to praise when our circumstances are bad is a sacrifice of praise. In Acts 16:25 Paul and Silas sang hymns while in jail. Job praised God, even though he had lost everything (Job 1:21).
4. **The Kind of Praise that is Intimate with God** (v6) – Our bed is a place of meditation and quietness where the body is resting and the spirit is awake. It is

also a place of intimate relationship. God seeks praise that is undisturbed, intimate, and focused.

5. **The Kind of Praise directed at God Himself** (v6) – High praise of God is directed at God Himself, extolling His attributes and virtues, not just to encourage ourselves or others. It is the kind of praise that brings angelic powers into our midst.

6. **The Kind of Praise that includes Scripture** (v. 6) – The two-edged sword is the Word of God. When we use the Word, our praise is reaching the ears of God, because the Holy Spirit wrote those words.

7. **The Kind of Praise that Recognizes our Position over the Enemy** (v7-9) – High praise is when we realize that we don't have to fight with the devil. He is already defeated. As it says in Ps. 2:4, "He who sits in the heavens laugh." He knows that the battle has already been won.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Do you praise without worrying about what people think? Are you concerned about how you look?
2. Are you able to praise through adversity, or do you moan and complain that God's hand is no longer on you? Discuss how you reacted the last time a trial came into your life.
3. Do you include the Word when you pray and praise? Do you spend time alone with God giving Him praise, not just for what He has done in your life, but for who He is?