

FPFWC Christian Development



Called to Praise God

October 2021

Fall Quarter

October 30, 2021

Lesson #5– Praise God for His Greatness

SCRIPTURE TEXT –Psalm 149:1-5; Psalm 150:1-6

Key Verse - Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.—Psalm 150:6

ICE BREAKERS –

1. *Why is it important that we Praise the Lord always?*

LESSON BACKGROUND

Psalms 149 and 150 are two of the five psalms that are known collectively as “the praise conclusion” to the Psalter as a whole, namely Psalms 146–150. These five have three things in common in that all (1) are anonymous, (2) were likely composed after the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s temple and walls (about 515 and 444 BC, respectively), and (3) begin and end with the phrase “Praise ye the Lord.” That phrase unites them with a shared theme. Even given that unity, the five offer different emphases in regard to that praise.

<u>Psalm</u>	<u>Praise Emphasis</u>
146	The suffering have hope
147	God cares for His people
148	God’s light is for everyone
149	God protects His people
150	Ways to praise

Set in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, this was the time of Persian dominance (about 539–330 BC). Jewish life was difficult during this period (examples: Ezra 4:24; Nehemiah 4:10–11; Haggai 1:6). But despite the challenges, this new beginning and the thrill of restoration resulted naturally and appropriately in the need for new songs of praise. These five psalms—the last two of which are the subject of today’s study—reveal some important things.

LESSON COMMENTARY –

Psalm 149: Praise the Lord All Israel

For an introduction, see Psalms 146–150: The Conclusion to Psalms above. The focus of this hymn of praise is Israel’s celebration at the establishment of the messianic kingdom.

At that time Zion will be restored and the enemies of Israel vanquished. Psalm 149 mirrors the content of Ps 2.

1. Israel Should Rejoice in Their King (149:1–5)

149:1–3. The opening praise of the Lord in this psalm narrowed the focus from the universal of Ps 148, to **Israel** and **Zion**. The call is to **be glad in their Maker** (cf. 95:6), to **rejoice in their King** (cf. 2:6; 145:1). To **praise His name** (v. 3) is to praise the Lord for His excellent reputation (cf. 23:3; 31:3 and comments there), and they are to do so with **dancing ... let them sing praises ... with timbrel and lyre** (cf. 150:1–5). **Godly ones** occurs three times (vv. 1, 5, 9) in this psalm. There has always been a remnant of godly people in Israel (e.g., 1Kg 19:18), but the focus of this psalm together with the following one is ultimately on the future. Then **the sons of Zion** (all Israel) will **rejoice in their King** (Jesus the Messiah; see comments at Zch 12:10 and Rm 11:26). Then, the kingdom of Messiah Jesus will be established.

149:4–5. The Lord created humanity (cf. Gn 1:27) and chose Israel to be His inheritance because He loves her (cf. Dt. 7:7–8; Ps 100:3). So it is fitting that **the LORD takes pleasure in His people** (cf. 22:3; 147:11). In His loving care, He will **beautify** (“adorn” ’ cf. Is 61:3) **the afflicted** (“humble”; cf. Ps 147:6), those who are totally dependent upon Him, with **salvation** (cf. 3:8; 18:46; 24:5). Certainly in light of the Lord’s attitudes and actions (v. 4), **the godly ones** (cf. v. 1) should **exult in glory and sing for joy on their beds**.

Psalm 150: The Great Hallelujah

For an introduction, see Psalms 146–150: The Conclusion to Psalms above. This final psalm is the great hallelujah, not only as the conclusion of Book Five (cf. 41:13; 72:18–19; 89:52; 106:48), but as the culmination of the whole Psalter.

1. Praise the Lord in the Sanctuary (150:1–2)

150:1–2. The psalmist here concluded the Psalter with a final, emphatic exhortation to offer praise to God. The venue for His praise is **His sanctuary** (lit., “holiness,” which may also refer to the holy of holies, or, perhaps His “holy height” [Ps 102:19; i.e., the “third heaven”] as indicated by the parallelism with **His mighty expanse** (the sky, as in Gn 1:7–8). Thus, the location of praise may be God’s heavenly sanctuary as well as the earthly temple.

2. Praise the Lord with Music and Dancing (150:3–5)

150:3–5. The enumeration of instruments in vv. 3–5 with which to accompany this praise—the **timbrel** and **lyre**—alludes to the span of praise offered to God throughout the OT, from “the lyre and the pipe” first mentioned in Gn 4:21 and the “dancing ... timbrel and lyre” of Ps 149:3 (cf. Miriam and women of Israel, Ex 15:20); to the “cymbals, harps and lyres” that accompanied the praise of the restored exiles (cf. Ezr 3:10; Neh 12:27). These instructions for joyful praise will be fully carried out during the rejoicing in the messianic kingdom (cf. Is 35:10; 51:11).

3. Let Everything Praise the Lord (150:6)

150:6. Consistent with his focus on the citizens of God's future kingdom, the psalmist concludes with a final exhortation, not to the godly ones of Israel alone, but to **everything that has breath** (i.e., humanity at large, comprised of redeemed Jewish people and redeemed Gentiles; cf. Is 56:7; Eph 2:15; Rv 5:6–10, 12–13). Together they will one day lift up their voices in unison before the throne of God and cry out, **Praise the LORD!** (*Hallelu-Yah!*).

LESSON NUGGET – Today's lesson is a call to praise the Lord. Where should we praise Him? Wherever you are, praise the Lord. Why should we praise Him? Because of what He does and who He is. How should we praise Him? The whole person should be one living sacrifice that praises the Lord. Who should praise Him? Everything that hath breath.

Sources: Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary.