

Survey of the Bible part 88 Praise and Thanksgiving Psalms

Last week we started the series on the Psalms and found that the psalms are divided up into 6 basic sections.

The lament and petition psalms, the praise and thanksgiving psalms which we'll be looking at today, the trust psalms, the hymn psalms, the royal psalms and the wisdom and didactic psalms.

The psalms were written by a number of different people with David as one of the prominent writers, but all of whom were writing these psalms under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as these psalms make up the very word of God.

So, it is quite possible that David and Solomon along with other writers of that day wrote lyrics with music that could fit into a psalm type category, but were not included in the word of God as they were not inspired by the Holy Spirit, in much the same way Paul or Peter likely wrote other letters to the churches that were not included in the Canon of God's word for the same reason.

God Himself determines what and where and through whom He will communicate with the world and His people.

The category of praise and thanksgiving psalms is the largest of the categories and therefore we would not be able to go through them all, and so we'll only touch on one tonight.

One of the themes that I find fascinating about the psalms in general is how our praise and reverence of God should be connected to Him as Creator. After all without Him creating there would be nothing physical that could declare His glory for people.

And this theme as Creator can be found in each category in some form.

Psalm 33:1-11 ^{NAU} Sing for joy in the LORD, O you righteous ones; Praise is becoming to the upright. ² Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings. ³ Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy. ⁴ For the word of the LORD is upright, And all His work is *done* in faithfulness. ⁵ He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD. ⁶ ***By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.*** ⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses. ⁸ ***Let all the earth fear the LORD;***

Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. ⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. ¹⁰

The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

David is associated with this psalm and he begins with a declaration to a particular group.

Sing for joy in the Lord, O you righteous ones.

Who are the righteous one's David is addressing here?

All of those who trusted the Lord for their salvation, the immediate context being those faithful Jews who would have trusted the Lord.

But it is implied that one who has trusted the Lord as Messiah would be compelled to sing for joy to the Lord as David says in verse one that praise is becoming to the upright.

What does that mean?

It should come naturally and it should come often because it is something that is attached to the new nature of such a person who knows and loves the Lord.

^{NIV} **Psalm 33:1** Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him.

^{ESV} **Psalm 33:1** Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright.

If this is the case then under what circumstances should this praise from the upright, be taking place?

This attitude of praise doesn't discount that there is a time for everything in life.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-4 ^{NAU} There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven-- ² A time to give birth and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted. ³ A time to kill and a time to heal; A time to tear down and a time to build up. ⁴ A time to weep and a time to laugh; A time to mourn and a time to dance.

And yet, this truth is prefaced with something that still remains true even in the midst of times in life that include both joy and

sorrow and that is a joy that is supernatural in the Lord for God's people.

Ecclesiastes 2:26 ²⁶ For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God's sight. This too is vanity and striving after wind.

And so the singing of joy to the Lord, as David points out in Psalm 33, doesn't always find its context in the times of joy we experience.

Rather, the joy is found in the context of what God has placed in our hearts as believers who have trusted Him for our very eternities. And that joy can be found in every time and place in life.

But that joy needs to be placed in context as well, because if it's not then that joy will always take a second seat to whatever is going on in our lives at the time.

Paul touches on this reality when writing to the church at Rome as he instructs the believers that our joy is essentially based on a peace that we have with God through Christ.

Romans 5:1-6 ^{NAU} Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; ⁵ and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. ⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

And so, Paul is saying that joy and peace and hope are all tied together and can be working together in good times and bad for the one who has trusted in Christ.

This is the God whom David is worshipping in joy.

But notice in verse two how David is encouraging the congregation to enter into this joy with singing and with musical instruments.

Psalm 33:2 ² Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings.

When God created man, He created into him a desire and an ability to express his gratitude and worship to God in a way that itself was creative as man was hardwired by God to take communication to a different level in the form of music that includes both singing and playing of instruments.

And we see this ability relatively early in the lives of men after the fall of man, in particular after the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. And it is in the lineage of Cain that music is first mentioned as it takes center stage in one part of Cain's family.

It is identified with the great-great grandson of Cain, Jubal.

Genesis 4:21 ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.

Now it is sometimes shown that Jubal was the inventor of musical instruments, but that's not what the text says. Rather, it simply says, he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. This may not exclude the invention of such instruments through this line but it doesn't preclude it.

Both the lyre and the pipe may have been around for hundreds of years as they were employed in the worship of God during the early days of Adam and Eve, possibly pre-fall. We're not told, but the indication of Genesis 4 is that even the seed of the serpent still retains the image of God and many of the qualities we associate with simply being human.

Both the unregenerate and the regenerate sing and make music and they always have. But part of the reason we see Jubal being identified with music is because it is Cain's line that is first addressed after the murder of Abel, and therefore since there was a break in the family of God, it would make sense to deal with the one breaking covenant as they venture out.

And so, as they venture out we see who comes from Cain and what they accomplished as humans made in the image and likeness of God.

When I was growing up in Ft. Lauderdale there was a family in town who were the Evert's. I went to high school with two of them, Chris and Drew Evert. You may not readily identify them

but you probably know of at least one of them if you followed tennis back in the 1970's.

Chris Evert played tennis at our high school and went on to win Wimbledon and the U.S Open and many other venues, but her tennis days didn't start at St. Thomas, she came from what can be called a tennis family.

There was a professional instructor who taught tennis at Holiday Park in Ft. Lauderdale who happened to be the father of Chris Evert. This tennis family played tennis all the time and so Chris had the opportunity at a very early age to become very proficient at the game.

In fact, she started playing at such an early age she became the inventor of the two handed backhand because she was too little to use only one hand when her father was instructing her.

Now the Evert family didn't invent tennis but because they were so immersed in the game, with some of the offspring advancing above all others in the game, their very name became synonymous with tennis.

In all likelihood it was also true of Jubal and his family. God had gifted Jubal with the desire and the ability to play and enjoy music to where he must have poured his life into music as he taught his offspring as they excelled above all others.

Could he have invented different types of instruments to better express his music? Absolutely. Just as Chris Evert didn't invent the backhand in tennis, she did invent the two-handed backhand to accommodate her particular style.

And so too, it is very likely that someone who knows all the ins and outs of a sport or occupation, those are the ones who best understand what makes a good instrument and what can make a good instrument better.

And so, it is quite appropriate to give credit where credit is due as we look back to the Jubal's in history for their contributions to humanity, just as we can thank different cultures for producing men and women who have done similar things in science, culture, medicine or the arts.

Most of us in this country certainly appreciate Edison for the successful mastering of the electric lightbulb and the Dictaphone

and DC power and many other inventions. And each time we flip an electric switch or turn on our cell phones, (the ancestor of one of Edison's inventions), we don't curse such things because they were invented by a pagan who went to his grave denying His Lord and Master as Savior.

Edison was a deist who "believed that a Higher Power was responsible for the creation of the world and set the laws of nature in motion—but the Creator's job ended there."

"I never have denied Supreme Intelligence. What I have denied and what my reason compels me to deny, is the existence of a Being throned above us as a god, directing our mundane affairs in detail, regarding us as individuals, punishing us, rewarding us as human judges might."⁴

"I cannot accept as final any theory which is not provable. The theories of the theologians cannot be proved. Proof, proof! That is what I always have been after; that is what my mind requires before it can accept a theory as fact."⁵)" From the website Hollowverse. <http://hollowverse.com/thomas-edison/>

There is a grace that God extends to all mankind, what some call common grace. You and I in Christ have experienced a saving grace that only God employs to all who belong to Him as He has chosen them before the foundations of the world.

David knew and continues to know this God and this psalm continues down the halls of time for our benefit to draw our attention to the very God and Creator who has given us life.

Psalm 33:3 ³ Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

When David says to sing a new song there are a couple of things to consider in the context.

The first thing to notice is, to whom is this new song to be sung?

It is to be sung to the Lord.

But in David's thought process, is a new song simply a different song that he sang from the last song? Is that what he means by new?

^{NAU} **Psalm 40:3** He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and fear And will trust in the LORD.

^{NAU} **Psalm 98:1** A Psalm. O sing to the LORD a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him.

^{NAU} **Isaiah 42:10** Sing to the LORD a new song, *Sing* His praise from the end of the earth! You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it. You islands, and those who dwell on them.

The new song that David and Isaiah speak of is a song that is centered on the Messiah with the express purpose of worshipping this Messiah with praises and thanksgiving because He is worthy. And this is clearly seen in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 5:6-14 ⁶ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. ⁷ And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. ⁸ When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. ¹⁰ "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." ¹³ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." ¹⁴ And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.

This is the Savior David sings to with skillful playing and a melodious voice. And it is this God who made all things for His glory to receive praise from every corner of His creation.

Psalm 33:4-6 ⁴ For the word of the LORD is upright, And all His work is *done* in faithfulness. ⁵ He loves righteousness and justice;

The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD. ⁶ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.

This awesome God is worthy of our praise. He speaks and all things come to pass, but it is this same God who speaks and must be listened to because He is faithful to His word.

Psalm 33:8-12 ⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. ⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. ¹⁰ The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation. ¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.

This nation whose God is the Lord has never existed in such a way that it could be said that they all worship the Lord at all times. The United States has been called a Christian nation. It has never been a Christian nation at any time in its existence. It has been influenced greatly by Christians and the word of God at certain times in history, but the nation has never had every citizen bow the knee to Christ, nor has it been its job to do so.

There is only one nation that will ever bow the knee with every citizen honoring their King and Lord and that is the nation, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.

When will that nation exist?

On the new earth.

Revelation 21:1-5 ^{NAU} Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

This is the nation, the people, whom David speaks of in this psalm for whom the world was fashioned by God, a world where the curse is finally gone and sin no longer hangs over our heads. All things will be made new.

But until that time our new song must be sung every moment of our lives.

And this is how David ends this psalm.

Psalm 33:18-22 ¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope for His lovingkindness, ¹⁹ To deliver their soul from death And to keep them alive in famine. ²⁰ Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. ²¹ For our heart rejoices in Him, Because we trust in His holy name. ²² Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, According as we have hoped in You.

Our hope and the One in whom we hope will determine when and how we sing this song.

But when we glory in the reality of what David says in that **Psalm 33:6** ⁶ *By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host*, then we can begin to put into perspective that nothing is beyond Him and nothing will be spared by our God to bring us to Himself, not even sparing His only begotten Son who loved us so much that He died to purchase us and a kingdom for us to dwell in with Him forever in peace and joy.

Praise and thanksgiving to the Lord our God is becoming to the upright.