

Psalm 150: Culminating in Praise

1. Reviewing the Structure of the Psalms

The Book of Psalms is not just a random collection—it is carefully arranged into five “books,” mirroring the five books of Moses (the Torah/Pentateuch). Each section gives us a unique reason to praise and worship God:

Book I (Psalms 1–41) – Genesis:

God’s creation, man’s fall, and God’s faithfulness to individuals. Praise Him for His personal deliverance and covenant faithfulness.

Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament^[a] shows ^[b]His handiwork.

²*Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.*

³*There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard.*

⁴*Their ^[c]line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world.*

- We praise God because he made us

Book II (Psalms 42–72) – Exodus:

Praises God for His deliverance, and his mighty hand, and his great works.

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, A^[a] very present help in trouble.

²*Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the ^[b]midst of the sea;*

- We praise God because he delivers us

Book III (Psalms 73–89) – Leviticus:

Worship in the sanctuary, holiness, God’s presence among His people. Praise Him for His holiness and dwelling with us.

Psalm 84

How lovely^[b] is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts!

² My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

- We praise God because he is with us

Book IV (Psalms 90–106) – Numbers:

Recounts Israel's time in the Wilderness, praises God for His forgiveness and mercy, despite their unfaithfulness

Psalm 106

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. ² Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can declare all His praise?

- We praise God because he forgives us

Book V (Psalms 107–150) – Deuteronomy:

God's covenant renewal, thanksgiving, and the hope of Messiah. Praise Him for His Word, His promises, and the coming Redeemer.

Psalm 107

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy, ³ And gathered out of the lands, From the east and from the west, From the north and from the south.

- We praise God because he redeems us

Each book concludes with a doxology, culminating in a crescendo of praise in Psalms 146–150, showing us that all life is meant to end in worship.

2. Prophetic Psalms Fulfilled in Christ

Some of the most powerful psalms point directly to Jesus, fulfilled in the New Testament:

Psalm 2 –

⁷“I will declare the ^[e]decree:

The Lord has said to Me,

‘You are My Son,

Today I have begotten You.

⁸*Ask of Me, and I will give You*

The nations for Your inheritance,

And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

- Prophecies the only begotten Son of God will reign as king of all the Earth

Psalm 16 –

¹⁰For You will not leave my soul in ^[e]Sheol,

Nor will You allow Your Holy One to ^[f]see corruption.

¹¹You will show me the path of life;

In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;

At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

- Prophecies the death, resurrection, and eternal reign of Christ at the right hand of God

Psalm 22 –

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

- Christ intentionally quotes this verse on the cross so that we will recognize that Psalm 22 is about him

¹⁶For dogs have surrounded Me;

The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.

They^[f] pierced My hands and My feet;

¹⁷I can count all My bones.

They look *and* stare at Me.

¹⁸They divide My garments among them,

And for My clothing they cast lots.

- Every detail of Christ’s crucifixion is prophesied in the 22nd Psalm

Psalm 69 –

*⁹Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up,
And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.*

- Both the pharisees and the disciples recognized Jesus’ fulfillment of this when he cleansed the temple

*²¹They also gave me gall for my food,
And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

- Christ calls out “I thirst” from the cross, so that this prophecy is fulfilled

Psalm 110 – The Eternal Priest-King: “Sit at My right hand...” quoted more than any other psalm in the NT.

*The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”*

- The most quoted prophetic verse of the psalms, prophecies that Jesus would sit at the right hand of the father.

Psalm 118 – The Cornerstone: “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”

The stone *which* the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.

- Prophecies that Christ would be rejected by the world, but would be the cornerstone of redemption.

The Psalms are quoted all throughout the new testament, especially Hebrews and Acts, and are constantly recognized as prophetically fulfilled in Christ.

This shows us that way before Israel realized it they were singing songs of praise and hope to Jesus Christ.

3. The Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120–134)

These 15 psalms were sung by pilgrims on their way up to Jerusalem for the great festivals. The phrase “ascent” comes from going up to the house of the Lord—physically up the hills to Jerusalem, but also spiritually up into God’s presence.

Pilgrimage Theme: They remind us that life itself is a journey toward God's eternal dwelling.

3 Feasts

Passover/Unleavened Bread (spring)

Passover commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 12). The blood of the lamb on the doorposts caused the angel of death to "pass over" them.

Unleavened Bread followed immediately, symbolizing removing sin and corruption (leaven often symbolized sin) as they left Egypt quickly.

Christ fulfills: by being the final Passover lamb and the Bread of Life.

Weeks/Pentecost (summer)

Celebrated **50 days after Passover**. It was a harvest festival, offering the "firstfruits" of wheat (Lev. 23:15–21).

Jewish tradition also connected it with the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai.

It was a time to remember God's law, and give him the firstfruits of the harvest.

Christ Fulfills: by sending the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the firstfruits of what is to come.

Tabernacles/Booths (fall)

Celebrated at the end of harvest (Lev. 23:33–43). Israelites lived in temporary booths (tents) to remember God's provision in the wilderness and His dwelling with them.

The booths or "tabernacles (dwelling places) also represented God's presence with his people in the Tabernacle

It was the most joyful feast, marked by water-pouring ceremonies and lights in the Temple. The water pouring reminded them of God's provision of water in the wilderness, and the lighting of lamps symbolized God's guiding light in the wilderness.

Christ Fulfills: by being both the Living Water and Light of the World, both statements he made during the feast of tabernacles

Because Christ has fulfilled the pilgrimage feasts, we can now look at these psalms as pointing not to an earthly pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but a spiritual pilgrimage to Christ.

Psalm 121

I will lift up my eyes to the hills—

From whence comes my help?

² My help comes from the Lord,

Who made heaven and earth.

³ He will not allow your foot to ^[a]be moved;

He who keeps you will not slumber.

⁴ Behold, He who keeps Israel

Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵ The Lord is your ^[b]keeper;

The Lord is your shade at your right hand.

⁶ The sun shall not strike you by day,

Nor the moon by night.

The Journey matters

We are all on a journey that serves a purpose. It's not just about where we are going. You can't wait until you are near the end to prioritize growing closer to God.

The Journey is meant to be a continuous "ascent" towards God.

It's a learning Experience

Everything you endure in this life serves a purpose to teach you more about God, more about His Faithfulness, and more about how to trust.

Never stop learning about God, His Word, His Character, His Holiness, etc.

The Goal is Worship

All the Psalms crescendo to a point that is exclusively worship and praise to God. The purpose of all things is that we would glorify Him as he deserves. Are you going to live out your purpose?

The Psalms show us every season of life—joy, grief, doubt, repentance, praise—and point us to God as our Creator, Deliverer, Shepherd, and King.

They also point us to Christ, the true Son, Shepherd, Cornerstone, and King who fulfills them all.

As the Psalms end with “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD” (Psalm 150:6), so should our lives.

Psalm 150: The Final Call to Worship

The Structure and Context

- Psalm 150 is the **last psalm in the Psalter** and serves as the climactic doxology.
- It is short (only 6 verses), but every line is a command: “*Hallelujah! Praise Yah!*” (that’s literally what “Praise the LORD” means in Hebrew).
- Every verse begins with הללו (halēlû) – *praise* – an imperative verb in plural, meaning *all of you, praise together*. This is a corporate command, not individual.
- The psalm answers **four key questions** about worship:
 1. **Where?** (v.1) – In His sanctuary, in His mighty heavens.
 2. **Why?** (v.2) – For His mighty deeds, for His surpassing greatness.
 3. **How?** (vv.3–5) – With every kind of instrument.
 4. **Who?** (v.6) – Everything that has breath.

Verse-by-Verse Breakdown

Praise^[a] the Lord!

Praise God in His sanctuary;

Praise Him in His mighty^[b] firmament!

- **Sanctuary (בְּקִדְשׁוֹ – bəqodshô):** Literally, *His holy place*. This refers to the Temple, but ultimately points to His presence among His people. In the New Testament, the sanctuary expands—*our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit* (1 Cor 6:19), and heaven itself is the true sanctuary (Heb 9:24).
- **Mighty heavens (בִּרְקִיעַ עֲזוֹ – birqîa‘ ‘uzzô):** *the expanse of His might*. This points to creation itself, the heavens declaring His glory (Ps 19:1). Worship happens on earth and in heaven simultaneously—a cosmic call.

² Praise Him for His mighty acts;

Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

- **Mighty deeds (גְּבוּרָתָיו – gəvûrotāyw):** Refers both to creation (Genesis 1 power) and redemption (Exodus deliverance). God is praised for what He has *done*.
- **Excellent greatness (רַב גְּדֻלּוֹ – rōb gudlô):** Literally “the abundance of His greatness.” Not just acts, but His *infinite nature*. God is praised for *who He is*.

³ Praise Him with the sound of the ^[tr]trumpet;

Praise Him with the lute and harp!

⁴ Praise Him with the timbrel and dance;

Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!

⁵ Praise Him with loud cymbals;

Praise Him with clashing cymbals!

Each instrument listed would have been part of Temple or celebratory worship. The range covers **wind, strings, percussion, and human voice**—showing the fullness of sound.

1. Trumpet (שׁוֹפָר – shôphār):

- A ram’s horn, not a metal trumpet. Used in Israel’s history for battle, coronations, and announcing feasts (Lev 25:9).
- Symbol of **God’s kingship and victory**. In the NT, connected to the final trumpet at Christ’s return (1 Cor 15:52).

2. Lute/harp (נֶבֶל – nebel):

- A 10-stringed harp. The word *nebel* also means “skin” or “jar,” suggesting it was made of stretched animal hide.
- Associated with **joyful singing and thanksgiving**.

3. Lyre (כִּנּוֹר – kinnôr):

- A smaller stringed instrument, David’s favorite instrument (1 Sam 16:23).
- Symbol of **personal devotion**.

4. Tambourine (תֶּפֶחַ – tōph):

- A frame drum, often played by women in victory dances (Exod 15:20, Miriam after the Red Sea).
- Symbol of **celebration, dance, and deliverance**.

5. Dance (מַחֲוֹל – māḥôl):

- Not an instrument, but movement of the whole body. Worship is not only with voice or hands, but **our whole being**.

6. Strings (מִנִּיִּם – minnîm):

- A general word for “stringed instruments.” Could include harps, lyres, or other stringed varieties.
- Symbol of **musical variety**, opening the door to creativity.

7. Flute (עוּגָב – ‘ūgāb):

- A woodwind instrument, possibly a pipe. Mentioned early in Gen 4:21 (Jubal, “father of all who play the flute and harp”).
- Symbol of **joy and festivity**.

Cymbals (צִלְצֵל – ṣilṣēl):

⁵ *Praise Him with loud cymbals;*

Praise Him with clashing cymbals!

- The Hebrew form mimics the sound: *tsil-tsil*. Loud crashing cymbals (צִלְצֵלֵי תְרוּעָה – ṣilṣelê terû‘āh) emphasize triumph.

A. “Cymbals of Hearing” (tsiltselê shāma‘)

- *Shāma* ‘ means “to hear, to listen.”
- These were likely the **smaller or thinner cymbals**, producing a **clear, bright ringing** sound used in regular temple music and processions (see 1 Chronicles 15:16, where Levites play cymbals “to make a sound of joy”).
- Symbolically, this represents **ordered, harmonious praise** — the kind of worship that is skillful, reverent, and musical.

B. “Cymbals of Terû ‘āh” (tsiltselê terû ‘āh)

- *Terû ‘āh* means “a loud shout, a war cry, or trumpet blast.” It’s the same word used in Leviticus 23:24 for the “*blowing of trumpets*” on feast days.
- These cymbals are associated with **shouting, triumph, and victory**, possibly larger and struck more forcefully for festivals or battle processions.
- Symbolically, this represents **unrestrained, exuberant praise** — spontaneous, emotional, and powerful.

By pairing them, David paints the full spectrum of worship:

- Musical precision and joyful noise.
- Artful beauty and raw enthusiasm.
- Temple ceremony and triumphant celebration.

It’s like saying, “Praise Him with the harmonious ring of worship and with the thunderous crash of victory!”

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

^[d]*Praise the LORD!*

- **Everything that has breath (כל הנשמה – kol hanneshāmāh):**
 - The word *neshamah* is the very breath God gave Adam at creation (Gen 2:7).
 - This means all living beings—every creature sustained by God’s breath—are called to give that breath back in praise.
- It is **universal worship**, the Psalter’s climax: from one man’s song (David) to one nation (Israel) to **all creation** lifting up praise.
- The final word of the Psalms is “**Hallelujah**”—a word so sacred it transcends translation. It is both the **beginning and end of worship**.

Theological Significance and Final Takeaways

True Worship is in Totality

- The full spectrum of musical instruments and artistic mediums is presented to show us that true worship is not done in partiality.

You are an instrument of praise to God

- The breathe of God is breathed in you, for the express purpose of returning it to him in praise.

Your True identity is found in worship and glory to God

- The world is full of people having identity crisis because they don't know who they are. And trying to find your identity in anything other than an instrument for God's glory will leave you bitter, angry, selfish, and self centered.

If you don't worship, the universe will

Luke 19:40

⁴⁰But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

- Jesus quotes Psalm 118:26, again fulfilling prophecy from the Psalms
- Worship is woven into the fabric of creation. The heavens declare the Glory of God.
- It's not optional. If those with the breath of God don't praise, those without will.

Revelations 5:13

¹³And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

*"Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and [e]ver!"*

- Every creature- all created things
- Under the Earth- encompasses the physical world as well as the dead or condemned. Those awaiting resurrection and those awaiting judgement

- Even those who reject God will ultimately give him praise and Glory