

A MESSAGE FROM THE PSALMS
FOR THE END OF THE YEAR
Psalm 150

12/31/78
10:00 AM

Intro: It would seem significant that the last 7 Psalms are specifically Psalms of Praise.

This is emphasized by the fact that the Psalms immediately before Psalm 144 are Psalms of Depression, of Discouragement -- Psalms in which the Psalmist is imploring the Lord for help which has not come. This is especially true from Psalm 140 to 143!

But the tone of the Psalms changes remarkably in Psalm 144 -- and the book concludes on that same high theme -- as a reading of Psalm 144 to Psalm 150 will show.

Both the OT and the NT make it clear that the child of God is to be always praising the Lord -- that praise and thanksgiving are among the distinguishing marks of a child of God. Cf. 1 Thess. 5:18, "In everything give thanks . . ."

One of the helpful things about these 7 Psalms, however, is not just the fact that they encourage praise, but they teach us what praise means -- and they indicate some of the things for which we should give praise.

This is a subject that occupies us immediately with the Lord. He is the One we are praising. This would appear obvious, but the Spirit of God has placed special emphasis upon it in Psalms 146 through 150 because each of these Psalms begins and ends with the word, HALLELUJAH (meaning, Praise the Lord)!

In other words, praise is not an end in itself. It is not to become a mere ritual. It is a divinely appointed ministry for every child of God in which we are to be concerned with the blessings we have from God, and then render to Him the praise for which He is so worthy!

Coming, as they do, at the end of this book, they fittingly indicate that which should concern us last of all -- in our circumstances, at the end of this year! Praise is a ministry that will carry over into heaven. All through eternity we will be praising the Lord -- praising Him as He ought to be praised. Therefore, it behooves us to learn to praise Him now. There is no better place to learn than from the Psalms. There is no better time than at the end of the year when we look back over 1978 only to find more reasons than we can number for which to praise the Lord.

This morning let us look briefly at these 7 Psalms, Psalm 144 through 150, and from each seek to get the main emphasis relating to praise from each of these Psalms.

I. PSALM 144.

David here seems overwhelmed with the realization that God would condescend to deal with him, or with any man.

See especially vv. 3, 4 -- and then also in v. 10, where even the highest, the "kings," are in need of his help.

It does not seem to be man's sinfulness that fills David with such amazement at this point, but simply the fact that he is man, human, as compared with God, Who is the Lord!

This is one of the first truths for us to learn that will make us realize that all of our blessings are from the Lord, and that we must praise Him!

II. PSALM 145.

This Psalm is also a Psalm of David, and a Psalm of Praise -- but the theme is different.

Here it is on the character of God -- on His attributes.

Read it and see how many of them you can find.

This is the very heart of eternal life, and of all spiritual life -- to know the Lord. And all that we know and all that we learn about the Lord is to become one of our chief subjects for praise.

Here David speaks of the greatness of:

- 1) God's goodness.
- 2) God's power.
- 3) God's righteousness.

Note how each gives us abundant cause for praising the Lord!

III. PSALM 146.

This is the first of the five Hallelujah Psalms.

It is a Psalm in which there is a warning, as well as encouragement to trust the Lord -- a warning against putting our trust in men, even in princes. See v. 3.

But notice the hope expressed in v. 5 -- the confidence we have in the Lord, able to help, willing to help, One who has helped in the power -- One Who has helped, and who continues to meet the needs of His people, protecting them even from their enemies.

This cannot be omitted when we think of the reasons we have for praising the Lord.

IV. PSALM 147.

Verse 5 seems to sound the keynote of this Psalm: we should praise Him because of His great "understanding"!

We need to recognize that there are purposes behind all that the Lord does -- that He is sovereignly working out those purposes.

And coming down to the end of the Psalm we see that those purposes are expressed nowhere as they are in the Word! See vv. 19, 20.

So His Word must also be a subject of our praise, showing as it does that which pleases Him, as well as that which is according to His wisdom.

V. PSALM 148.

Verse 1 speaks of "the heavens"; verse 7 speaks of "the earth." All creation is called upon to praise the Lord because creation shows the glory of the Lord. See verses 13, 14.

This corresponds with the truth of Psalm 19, and Psalm 24.

The marvels of creation point to the praise of our God.

VI. PSALM 149.

While all of creation rightly owes praise to God, none are more obligated in their praise than are "the congregation of saints." Theirs is "a new song" -- one that is different from the song that anyone else can sing!

The Psalmist even speaks of it as an honor (v. 9) as well as their defense, to praise the the Lord. See v. 6.

VII. PSALM 150.

Although there have been other calls to praise the Lord, this is distinctively a call -- and included are the answers to the questions:

- 1) Where should we praise the Lord (v. 1)?
- 2) Why should we praise the Lord (v. 2)?
- 3) How should we praise the Lord (vv. 3-5)?
- 4) Who should praise the Lord (v. 6)?

Concl. and Appl.: Will you respond with your praises? What better way to end this year! To do so, is right; not to do so, is to be disobedient, and to withhold from God the glory that rightfully belongs to Him. Let us praise the Lord!