

How Are We to Praise Our Father?

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We've all seen—at least I have and assume most of you have, in years past and currently—worship services on TV and the internet, where various churches broadcast their services, we see quite often where congregations, particularly in these mega-churches, are singing and dancing and waving their hands, jumping up and down and most often to very upbeat music—even rock and roll music. They are in the aisles, running up and down. I don't know if it's true now, but I can remember in years past, some will get tremors and fall down on the ground and shake as though the Holy Spirit is motivating them. I think we've all seen that—some people get completely out of control. When you watch that, you wonder—and I'm not casting aspersions—in the minds of those people who are joyously dancing and throwing their arms up and screaming and all of that, are their minds on the God they worship or are their minds on the music and the feeling good and the singing and all of that? That has gone on certainly in the United States and other Western societies, all around the world actually, for decades—hundreds of years.

Historically in the greater church of God, going back to the 1930's and 40's when the Worldwide Church of God started, we as a group ran from that way of worshipping. It just seemed unseemly and it was like putting on a show. Much of it being not much more than a feelgood time, where you come and dance and sing and then go home and we feel better than when we started. We as the greater church avoided the word "praise" because those services were "praise services", allegedly to praise God Almighty. Waving hands to Him, singing to Him, dancing and shouting to Him and all of that. We avoided the subject of "praise" or the word "praise" because it became a Protestant thing—something that we avoided. But when you look at it, it's not a Protestant thing, it's a biblical thing—praise. Praising God Almighty is a biblical thing. It's a biblical subject, but I don't think I can remember ever hearing a sermon on that subject. We talked about obedience, we talked about ruling with a rod of iron and the wrath of God, but we rarely ever talked about praising God.

A while back I decided, at the suggestion of one of our members who wrote me an email to that effect, I decided to look up all the derivatives of the word "praise". There were hundreds and I went through every scripture in the Bible using that word, to actually see what the Bible said on the subject. By way of introduction to this subject—we'll get to the title in a minute—let's start with David's example of praise, singing praise and demonstrating praise. Before we turn there, let's remind ourselves that David had a heart pleasing to God Almighty. We won't turn there but we find that in Acts 13:22, if you want a reference. If David is going to be in God's Kingdom and he is going to be over the 12 tribes of Israel, we best look at his example because there might be something we've been missing or something we need to learn. His example might give us insight into this subject of "Praising God Almighty". With that in mind, let's go to Psalm 18:3,

this all is by way of introduction to the subject. David is writing and everything will be out of the King James unless otherwise noted.

Psalm 18:3 *I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. (KJV)*

Implication being, if I praise Yehovah that will help me to be saved from my enemies. Let's go all the way to the back of the book of Psalms, Psalm 145 and we're going to read the first three verses. If you have a New King James or the margin of the King James it says David's Psalm of Praise. A whole psalm dedicated to David praising Yehovah.

Psalm 145:1 *I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.*

2) *Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.*

3) *Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. (KJV)*

Then let's go to the next chapter, Psalm 146:1-2; David is praising Yehovah.

Psalm 146:1 *Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.*

2) *While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. (KJV)*

So, we get the idea—and these are just three of hundreds—that praising Yehovah was very important to David. We're going to see as we go through, it's much more important than we even thought. It's very important to David and dozens of Psalms indicate that, if we take the time to go through them. Maybe the idea of praising our Father is not so Protestant after all. I'm not talking about the manner in which we do it, but the idea of praising our Father.

The Hebrew word for *praise* in all the scriptures we just read is Strong's #1984 and transliterated into the English word *halal*. That's where we get the English word *hallelujah*. Let me read from The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament by Baker and Carpenter on *halal*. They say:

A verb meaning to praise or to commend; it can also mean to boast or to shine; the root meaning may be to shine but could also be to shout. [That's going to come up later.] The word most often means praise and is associated with the ministry of the Levites who praise God morning and evening. [We'll see that before we're done.] All creation however is urged to join in and various instruments were used to increase the praise of God. [It wasn't just the voice, but with musical instruments.] They conclude by saying, the word hallelujah is a command to praise Yah, the LORD, derived from the Word halal.

We see here, by way of introduction, we've read three Old Testament scriptures, but was it continued in the New Testament? Let's go to Acts 2:47, this is after Pentecost and talking about all the believers and how they gathered together, sold what they had and kept everything in common for a period of time. Notice all who believed, what were they doing?

Acts 2:47 *Praising [the Greek word for the is not translated, praising the God] God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (KJV)*

We see, even the New Testament, when it started, it started with the brethren praising God Almighty for what was going on, for their conversion, their calling, their baptism and the mighty works that were being done. Even from these very few verses, we see that it's obvious we should praise our Father, Yehovah. But then the question becomes, how do we go about that? What is the right way to do that? Which leads to our title today.

How Are We To Praise Our Father?

We'll cover it in five points. The first couple of points we're going to establish some background.

1. In the spirit realm, angels continually praise Yehovah, our Father.

We could go through every verse in the Old Testament and establish that and spend the rest of the time just talking about how angels praised God Almighty. But let's just look at Psalm 148:1-2.

Psalm 148:1 *Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.*
2) *Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. (KJV)*

When you read through the Old Testament, the angels are continually singing praise to God Almighty, Jesus Christ sitting right beside Him between the cherubim, in front of the sea of glass. We don't know but there might be millions of angels singing and sounds that we as humans can't even hear. Can you imagine the majesty of it all? We see here that the angels praise Him and glorify and honor Him.

Now let's go to the New Testament and use scripture to establish this fact, beginning in Luke 2:8. We're breaking into the account of the birth of Christ—the birth of the Messiah, the forerunner of our salvation—and the shepherds are in the field.

Luke 2:8 *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*
9) *And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. (KJV)*

Can you imagine being out in a pasture and then having the glory of the LORD descend on you and what you must have thought?

Continuing in verse 10) ...

10) And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

12) And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (KJV)

Can you imagine what it would be like to be a shepherd and have your eyes opened up, probably peering into heaven in a vision to see the angelic host singing praises to God Almighty because of the birth of His Son. To establish a background, we need to understand in the spirit realm, angels continually praise God Almighty.

2. In the Old Testament, the Levites were appointed to praise Yehovah.

That was one of their jobs. They were called to praise God Almighty. Let's look at the time of David, 2 Chronicles 23:27-28 and 30.

1 Chronicles 23:27 *For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above:*

28) Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

30) And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even; (KJV)

So we see that the Levites are tasked with praising Yehovah morning and evening every day of the year. That was their job. Did that continue? Let's look in the days of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah; this is after God Almighty promised to deliver them from Ammon and Moab, 2 Chronicles 20:18-19.

2 Chronicles 20:18 *And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.*

19) And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise [halal] the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high. (KJV)

This wasn't some quiet murmuring, they were shouting for joy and praising Yehovah because of His deliverance. We see that some praise can be shouted and duly so, if we are delivered from death or destruction. Then Hezekiah became king of Judah and he restored Temple worship so let's go to 2 Chronicles 29:30.

2 Chronicles 29:30 *Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped. (KJV)*

When the Temple was restored, the Levites were commanded to praise God Almighty day and night and certainly on this occasion when the Temple was rededicated, to praise Yehovah for that. Now let's go to chapter 31:2 and see that this continued under Hezekiah. I'll read this out of the New Living Translation.

2 Chronicles 31:2 *Hezekiah then organized the priests and Levites into divisions to offer the burnt offerings and peace offerings, and to worship and give thanks and praise [halal] to the Lord at the gates of the Temple. (NLT)*

So, we see it continuing now in Jerusalem at the Temple. Did this continue into the second Temple period, after the rebuilding of the Temple? Let's go to Ezra 3:10-11.

Ezra 3:10 *And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD [what a joyous time after all they had been through], they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. (KJV)*

We see it's appropriate in various circumstances to praise Yehovah with instruments that make noise—cymbals for example. We're going to see some other instruments that are mentioned.

11) And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. (KJV)

You can see why it would be appropriate at a time like this, after all they had been through, coming back to the holy land, laying the foundation, all the trials and tribulations and on that the foundation was laid and it was finished for the music to come out and the people to shout praise to Yehovah—after all they had been through. Closing out this second point, in the Old Testament, Yehovah decreed that the Levites should lead praise to Him and of course in situations like we just read with the laying of the foundation, I'm sure the whole city, all who were there, shouted praise to Yehovah. We see also that the Levites were tasked with praising God Almighty, then the righteous kings of Israel and Judah praised and thanked Him greatly. We see various musical instruments were used in praising God and we see that praise can be sung or it can be

shouted or as we will see and know, we can praise God silently in our prayers; even in our thoughts.

3. We should praise our Father with singing and with music.

That is appropriate, that is biblical. Praising our Father with song and with music. Let's go to 2 Samuel 22:50, just one verse. David is praising Yehovah after being delivered from Saul and you can imagine David's heartfelt praise at a time like this.

2 Samuel 22:50 *Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name. (KJV)*

David wrote Psalms that were filled with praise, but you get the idea that he wasn't king yet, he had been saved from Saul and this was personal between David and Yehovah. He might have mouthed the words in sentences or might in his mind have conjured up a song which he was very talented at doing; we don't know. He was giving thanks and giving praise because he was delivered. Now let's go to Psalm 7:17, this is a Psalm of David. Notice his focus—when you go through the psalms, it happens time after time, it's over and over, David singing praise to God Almighty.

Psalm 7:17 *I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: (KJV)*

His righteousness is unlimited so David is saying he's going to sing praises in an unlimited manner because His righteousness is infinite.

17 continued) ... and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high. (KJV)

This occurs, as we're going to see, quite often as praises are sung to His name. We know His name is Yehovah and it says here, Yehovah most high. That tells us that Yehovah is the Most High, is the Almighty and we see that David composed this song and many songs to praise the very name of Yehovah. Now let's go to chapter 28:7, David is speaking.

Psalm 28:7 *The LORD is my strength and my shield; (KJV)*

If we haven't learned that by now, we should know that God Almighty is our strength and our shield.

7 continued) ... my heart trusted in him ... (KJV)

He went through a great deal of persecution and his life was on the line. We're learning day by day, given the world conditions, to trust in Yehovah.

7 continued) ... and I am helped: therefore, my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise him. (KJV)

David was zealous and he was inspired to create songs and music to praise Yehovah. He composed music and he was very talented in that way. I am totally lame that way and can't carry a tune in a bucket and never played a musical instrument. I admire David for his talent and ability and we are the beneficiaries of that to this day. Now look at Psalm 33:1.

Psalm 33:1 *Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.* (KJV)

Meaning upright people—humans—it is a right thing to do, an honorable thing to do, a praise worthy thing to do, to praise Yehovah.

2) *Praise the LORD with harp: [we see a musical instrument is appropriate to do that] sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.* (KJV)

So stringed instruments are appropriate. Will Berg wrote a paper a number of years ago, he went through and looked at all the instruments that were mentioned in the Bible that were appropriate for music to praise God—a very interesting paper. We see mentioned in the Bible, there are certain specific instruments that are appropriate and used to praise God Almighty. Now let's look at Psalm 68:32.

Psalm 68:32 *Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:* (KJV)

So, it's not just the Levites, it's not just Israel singing praises to Yehovah, but ultimately all kingdoms of the earth during the millennium are going to be taught to sing praises to God Almighty. Closing out this third point, today we praise our Father on Sabbath days like today where we sing songs. We've gathered our own hymnal in order to do that and to try and pick appropriate songs for the worship of God Almighty so we can sing properly. As we've seen from these scriptures, music and song are very important in praising God Almighty. I know sometimes it's easy when we come and gather and we start singing songs, it's time for the song service and it can be easy not to settle down and some people are talking and finally things calm down and we start singing.

Sometimes—for all of us—we know many of these songs by heart, we've sung them for decades. So given that fact, sometimes it's easy when we're sitting with the song book in front of us, we know it by heart, we can sing the words with the back part of our mind but the front part of our mind is somewhere else. We're thinking about what we're going to eat after services or about the football game the next day or thinking about who knows what. Looking around the room and getting distracted. It's easy to think of something else while we're singing praises to God Almighty. I don't want to be too strong in saying so, but do you think it might be an affront to God Almighty when He says, I want you to come on the Sabbath day and sing praises to Me. Then we're singing them, we're mouthing them—I'm guilty as anyone—and our mind is somewhere else. We're not focusing on the words and sometimes what I've done recently, if I know the song by heart, I'll just close my eyes and sing because I'm not distracted. If I don't

know the song by heart, I focus on the words. Who are you singing to and why are we singing? We have to focus on the words and focus on Whom we are singing the words to, because it's our way of praising God Almighty. That way we worship and praise our Creator in music and in song which we are told to do. It is a command; it is something that has existed for millennia. Closing point 3, we should worship and praise God Almighty in music and song. Here at services, we can do it in our home, we can do it in our car, we can do it while we're taking a walk. It would be pleasing to our Father.

Point 4, getting even more specific and bringing it home.

4. How specifically should we praise our Father?

What does the Bible say about how we should go about this? What aspects of our Father should we sing praise about? We're going to cover a few.

4A. We praise our Father's name and we praise our Father's titles.

His name is *Yehovah* but He has many titles. With that in mind, let's go to Psalm 113:1. We've read this before in the scriptures we've covered. The King James for the word *praise* also says *hallelujah*.

Psalm 113:1 *Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. (KJV)*

His name is *Yehovah*, we need to praise that name. What does that name mean? It means:

I have always been, I always will be, and I am right now.

Another one of His titles is the *Living God*. He is right now. With his titles of *Living God*, His name *Yehovah* and we're going to see some other titles, we can use those to praise Him and to be a focus of our praise. The name *Yehovah* and its meaning. We praise our *Father* that He has always been. Never had a beginning, He will never have an end and He lives right now. Let's go back to Psalm 7:17. This is a song; David is actually singing here. David is praising one of *Yehovah's* titles.

Psalm 7:17 *I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high. (KJV)*

Not only to His name, but His title *Most High*. We see very clearly that *Most High* and *Yehovah* are the same Being. This means He is eternal—*Yehovah* means that—but *Most High* means there is nobody higher than Him. He is supreme in authority. That is another thing we can praise our Father for, the fact that He is supreme and there is nobody above Him. Nobody is going to tell Him what to do. Now let's go to Psalm 86, this is a prayer of David in verse 12. This occurs over and over in the Psalms.

Psalm 86:12 *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore. (KJV)*

As we know, His name *Yehovah* means there has never been a time I haven't been. As human beings we have a hard time wrapping our head around that. I can understand that when we say God Almighty will never have an end, but to say He never had a beginning, for human beings like us it's hard to wrap our head around that. That you go back and you go back and you go back and you go back and there's never been a time where He hasn't existed. Some day when we're spirit beings, we will have an aha moment and understand that. David is praising His name, so point A is we praise our Father for His name and for His titles—*Almighty, Most High, living God*. You could have a whole prayer or song in our head about *Living God, Most High, Almighty*.

4B. We should praise our Father for His power.

David did that—let's go to Psalm 21:13. In praising, we are exalting God, exalting our Father and that's what David says here.

Psalm 21:13 *Be thou exalted, LORD [exalted means lifted up], in thine own strength [we don't have strength, our Father does]: so will we sing and praise thy power. (KJV)*

We should praise our Father; the fact that He is all powerful, He is Almighty. Nobody can defeat Him, nobody can turn Him. He will conquer all. We might live to see that. Look at Psalm 150:1. Talking about praising the Most High God.

Psalm 150:1 *Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary ... (KJV)*

That's where He lives. We can praise God Almighty about His throne between the cherubim and the sea of glass and the 24 elders and millions of angels at His command. We can praise Him as our Creator, the power that it took to create all that is. His power to control all that exists—everything is under His control. His power to rescue us and to save us. I can't tell you how many times my Father has rescued me in little ways and big ways. Going forward it's going to be impressed upon us that the only rescue we have is from God Almighty—nothing else.

4C. We praise our Father for His word.

We're told that in Psalm 56:4 and verse 10.

Psalm 56:4 *In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust [it's axiomatic that when we put our trust in Him, we put our trust in His Word]; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. (KJV)*

Because I praise His Word, I put my trust in Him and His Word.

10) In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word. (KJV)

Where would we be without the Word of God? To guide us, to lead us, to give us comfort—where would we be? I think all of us, if somebody said you can take one book with you, you can only have one book, what would that be? We know what that would be. We should praise our Father for that one book—for His Word.

4D. We praise our Father for what He has done for us.

Think about all the things that He does for us. David said that in Psalm 107, let's read verse 8. If you think about it, if our Father removed the air we are breathing, we would all be dead in a matter of two to three minutes. If you remove the water, it would be a few days.

Psalm 107:8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (KJV)

This is repeated in verse 15, 21, and 31. David was emphasizing that. Think about the majesty of the universe—not even talking about the spirit world, we can't comprehend the spirit world. But the majesty of the universe brings us to our knees in awesomeness. This beautiful earth. Man is doing its best to pollute it but it's a beautiful earth that our Father has created. Notice what Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 25:1 for praising our Father for all that He has done for us.

Isaiah 25:1 O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. (KJV)

What Isaiah is saying is that what we read in God's Word is faithful and true. We read of Israel being rescued, of the prophets being rescued and the patriarchs being rescued and we can count on that for us. The last scripture under point D is Jeremiah 20:13. Put ourselves into this scripture, into this verse. We've all been there, we've all been rescued.

Jeremiah 20:13 Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers. (KJV)

In 1 Corinthians 1:26 we're told we are *the weak of the world*. We're the poor of the world. We are not the high and the mighty. When we look back on our lives and how many times we have been rescued, relieved, pulled out of the fire by God Almighty? What He has done for us is something worthy of our praise. It's not a one thing deal where God rescues us and then we thank Him and move on. We need to thank Him and re-thank Him and re-thank Him. By rescuing us He has brought us to the point where we are today. We praise Him for our big blessing and we praise Him even for the little blessings. We thank Him for all the good He does for us. We should praise our Father because He created us. Then He called us to be Firstfruits. That's the amazing thing to

me; that all of us here, none of us high and mighty, none of us worthy of the praise of men or anything like that—He called us to be Firstfruits. I can't think of a greater blessing than that. To be called as the Firstfruits of God Almighty and to have He and His Son live in us in this life, in this horrible, evil world. We should praise our Father because He has called us and created us, He sustains us, He rescues us, He inspires us when we need it. We should praise Him for that continually.

4E. We praise our Father for His goodness, His kindness and His mercy.

David did just that. Let's go to Psalm 107:8, we read that a minute ago but with a different emphasis.

Psalm 107:8 *Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (KJV)*

He repeats it in verse 15, 21, and 31. What if God Almighty wasn't a good God? What if God Almighty had an evil streak? What if God Almighty had vengeance and what if God Almighty liked to play and toy with His creation? Like some kids pulling the wings off of a fly, just for amusement. God Almighty isn't that way. God Almighty never does anything for our harm—Romans 8:28. He never does anything for our harm. To thank Him, to praise Him because He is always good. Everything about Him is good. Everything He does for us is for our benefit. Look at chapter 117:1.

Psalm 117:1 *O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. (KJV)*

What a wonderful time it will be when the world praises Yehovah.

Continuing in verse 2) ...

2) For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth forever. Praise ye the LORD. (KJV)

He is merciful and kind, He is ready to forgive when we repent. He is eager to bring us back to a right standing with Him and we can count on that. How many times have we tried to apologize to somebody and they turned their back on us and walked away. Or got angry with us and started yelling at us. Our Father never does that. He is waiting like the father of the Prodigal Son, waiting for us to return, waiting for us to repent, and then all is forgiven—if we repent from the heart. Now let's go to Isaiah 63:7. The Bible is just full of scriptures that tell us how good and kind and merciful our Father is.

Isaiah 63:7 *I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD [they are tied together], according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. (KJV)*

We need to praise our Father daily for His mercy toward us, His favor toward us, the opening doors for us, protecting us, the list goes on and on. The last scripture under point E is 2 Chronicles 5:13. This is when the Ark was brought into the Temple that Solomon built. You can imagine the praises that were going on when the Ark was brought into Solomon's Temple.

2 Chronicles 5:13 *It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;* (KJV)

God Almighty came down to make His abode in that house and praises with musical instruments and voices—can you imagine being there and seeing that when that happened. So, we should praise our Father for His goodness, His mercy, His kindness, and favor.

4F. We should praise our Father out of our thankfulness.

Our thankfulness should lead to our praising God Almighty. David did just that, look at Psalm 92:1. The King James says, "This is a Psalm for the Sabbath Day", so very appropriate for today.

Psalm 92:1 *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:* (KJV)

His name is *Yehovah*, one of His titles is *oh Most High*. We praise His name, praise His titles and give thanks in doing so to Him. We see here that *Yehovah* and *Most High* are the same being. Now let's go to Psalm 106:1.

Psalm 106:1 *Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.* (KJV)

He is ready to forgive, He is merciful to us, His little kids, and thankfully He is not a strict task master who is ready to whip us and beat us. He is a loving Father that when we slip and fall—yes, it might hurt—but He's ready to pick us up, pat us on the back and point us in the right direction. Verse 2 out of the New Living Translation.

2) Who can list the glorious miracles of the Lord? (KJV)

We could go around the room and all of you within viewing distance and earshot could talk for days about the miracles our Father has done for each one of us. Day after day, year after year.

2 continued) ... Who can ever praise him enough? (KJV)

We can't praise Him enough. We can't thank Him enough, for how He treats us and how He takes care of us and how He rescues us and protects us. In private we should be praising our Father. When we're alone, when we're walking down the road, sitting in our chair, driving down the road in our car—we should praise our Father. Look at Psalm 34:1. This is a psalm of David. Did David just thank God and praise Him and then put Him in a box and put the box on a shelf in the closet and walk away and do something else? No, David didn't do that.

Psalm 34:1 *I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.* (KJV)

Of all the psalms we've read today—that's just a fraction of those that exist—we get the idea that David was praising God Almighty all the time. Thanking Him, elevating His name, blessing His name. We have so many things to be thankful for. A beautiful sunset, a blessing of good food—we live like kings and queens today compared to the world 500 to 1000 years ago or down through antiquity. All of these blessings! Because of my protocol I sometimes get chills and body aches and I never really appreciate hot running water as I do now. To get under a shower and turn it on really hot and have it run down your back, what a blessing. Most people who have ever lived have never had that blessing, and yet we do. Even the poorest of us have that blessing.

In private we should praise our Father for so many things that you could do it all day long. We praise and thank our Father for His blessings, for His goodness, for His kindness, for His mercy. We do so privately when we pray to Him and when we talk to Him. And openly we do it with one another and we shouldn't be afraid of doing it with one another. Mentioning how God blessed us this week or what He did for us today. We praise His name when we bring that out and it reinforces His goodness with all of us.

So thus far we've seen how we can praise our Father. We can praise Him for His name, His titles, for His power, His Word, for what He has done for each one of us, for His kindness and goodness and His mercy. We can praise Him by being thankful and noting that to Him every day. There's one more question that remains. I thought about this when I first came into the church—I wondered about it. It's a final question, point 5.

5. Why does our Father want us to praise Him?

He had millions of angels praising Him continually. The 24 elders praise Him continually. The Levites praised Him morning and evening. We are to praise Him every day. Why does He want us to praise Him? Is He insecure and needs the praise of men? Or is He vain enough to want continual praise? Of course not. We see politicians, we see former presidents, we see sports figures and entertainment figures who can't retire because they want to be in front of the crowd and receive the praise of men. It's like an addiction. Is our Father so weak that He needs that from us? Of course not, absolutely not. Our Father needs nothing from men or angels. Nothing from spirit beings. He lives as an entity unto Himself and needs nothing from those He has created. Then why does

our Father want us to continually praise Him? He doesn't need it, so why does He want it?

He wants us to praise Him for our benefit. Remember everything He does is for our benefit. He wants us to praise Him because it does us good. Remember all He does is for our good—Romans 8:28. So in praising Him it's not that He needs it and feeds on it or somehow can't exist without it, it's because it is good for us. In praising Him—every time we do that—we reestablish our relationship with Him. When we exalt His name, when we mention His titles as *Most High* and *Almighty* and the *Living God*, we remind ourselves that He is up there and we are down here. We are not almighty, we are not most high, we are not the living God. In fact, we're not going to live very long at all—any of us—compared to eternity. By praising our Father, we continually reestablish our view of who we are relative to Him. That's exactly what Yehovah did to Job. Let's go to Job 38—James covered this in his two-part series on Job. We'll read the first 7 verses. God Almighty is putting Job in his place and he's telling him, you look at who you are and then look at who I am and then tell me the difference. I'll read this out of the New Living Translation.

Job 38:1 *Then the Lord answered Job from the whirlwind:*

2) *'Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorant words?*

3) *Brace yourself like a man, because I have some questions for you, and you must answer them.* (NLT)

How would you like to be on the receiving end of that?

4) *'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you know so much.*

5) *Who determined its dimensions and stretched out the surveying line?*

6) *What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone*

7) *as the morning stars sang together and all the angels^[a] shouted for joy?* (NLT)

In putting Job in his place and establishing the fact that *Yehovah* is *Almighty*, He is the *Most High*, He is *Sovereign*, He can do whatever He pleases and has the power to do everything that He pleases, He's saying to Job, can you do this? Can you even come close to doing this? Can you even comprehend what I've done? Of course, the answer is "No". If we praise our Father continually, for all the reasons we've talked about today, we are reestablishing the fact that we are so blessed to know He exists, we are so blessed to be called by Him, we are so blessed to have His Holy Spirit, we're so blessed to have His Word and we are so blessed to have a relationship with Him, to look at Him on high, to take care of us, to rescue us, to provide for us and to usher into eternal life. It reminds us, when we praise Him. Yehovah was establishing in the mind of Job who Job was, relative to God Almighty.

When we praise Him in all the ways we have mentioned, we are reminded of Who He is, relative to us. Praising our Father keeps us looking to Him and not to men and not to ourselves. Consistently praising Him, which we should do, we are continually reminded

that He is sovereign and supreme. In contrast we are weak, temporary flesh and we have the opportunity to be like Him—eternal. To be in His presence for an eternity. In praising Him we are constantly reminded that He and His Son are our only hope. Man is not our hope, government is not our hope, this world is not our hope, only He and His Son can rescue us from evil and only He and His Son can give us eternal life. By praising Him we are reminded continually of this fact, that's why He wants us to praise Him—for our good. He doesn't need it.

Let's conclude now. In the future, this is the joyous thing, all peoples are going to praise Yehovah. Let's go to Joel 2:26, just the one verse. Joel is prophesying about a time yet future, not that far away—about a blessed time, a millennial time.

Joel 2:26 *And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.* (KJV)

The fact is, there will come a time when all people will be given the opportunity to know Yehovah and to praise Him. They won't be ashamed in doing so. They won't be called weirdos or wackos because the whole world will be doing so. Paul made an appeal to that in Romans 15:11. Let's turn there. Paul knew a time was coming when all races, all peoples, all nations, will praise God Almighty.

Romans 15:11 *And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.* (KJV)

Remember it was a huge change in the life of the Jews at the time to understand that God Almighty—Yehovah that they worshipped—would deal with the Gentiles, would deal with the other nations. Paul is reminding them that there is going to be a time when all the Gentiles, all the nations of the world are going to praise Yehovah.

One final scripture, let's go back to Psalm 148—we read a couple of verses in the beginning—we're going to read the first 14 verses as we conclude. I'll read this out of the New King James.

Psalm 148:1 *Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights!*

2) *Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts!*

3) *Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light!*

4) *Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens!*

5) *Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.*

6) *He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away.*

7) *Praise the LORD from the earth, You great sea creatures and all the depths;*

8) *Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;*

9) *Mountains and all hills; Fruitful trees and all cedars;*

- 10) *Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and flying fowl;*
- 11) *Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth;*
- 12) *Both young men and maidens; Old men and children.*
- 13) *Let them praise the name of the LORD, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven.*
- 14) *And He has exalted the horn of His people, The praise of all His saints— Of the children of Israel, A people near to Him. Praise the LORD! (NKJV)*

What a time that is going to be. If we praise our Father as supreme and we put Him first, we have one more scripture to cover—in the end, if we praise our Father and we follow the example of David and we praise Him for all He's done for us, guess what is going to happen to us. We will receive praise from Him. Think about that. Let's go to 1 Corinthians 4:5, final scripture. I'll read this out of the NIV. Paul is writing to us today.

1 Corinthians 4:5 *Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from [the word "the" is not translated] God. (NIV)*

So, if we praise our Father—which is something we should do every day in prayer, in songs, in our heart, in our conversations with one another—there will come a day when we will receive praise from Him. Praising our Father daily reminds us how blessed we are. How blessed we are to know Him, that we are called to know His Son and to know Him, to know Who He is, what He has done for us, what His power is, and to know and love His mercy, His kindness, His gentleness and His favor. So going forward let's follow David's example of praising our Father with all our hearts.