

A Call to Worship Together

I. Call to Worship

Our Thanksgiving service--antiphonal responses using just the phrase used here after each person testified to what God has done.

2 Chronicles 5:13-14 ...[I]t was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

In our Psalm:

Give thanks to the Lord. **For he is good. His love endures forever.**

Let *Israel* say (descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), **His love endures forever.**

Let the *House of Aaron* say (specifically the priests), **His love endures forever.**

Let *all who fear the Lord* say **His love endures forever.**

Ezra 3:11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures 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.

By the way, pagans have no one to thank or praise. They only try to praise creation itself – Mary Weller's son's yoga class.

II. The Psalmist (King) Testifies to God's Faithfulness

A. The Problem

1. Enemies on all Sides

If David, we know his enemies –the Philistines, his soldiers, his commanders (Joab, Asahel, Abner ,etc.), his best counselor (Ahithophel), his own son (Absalom)

2. Anguish, Weakness, Fear

His weakness--his own lust, his family life (adultery, incest, rivalry, political in-fighting)

His anguish and his fears stem from real enemies and from his own sin and his family's.

B. The Answer

1. God loves and cares for him.

God hears and answers him (v. 5)

God sets him free (v. 5)

God is with him (vv. 6, 7)

God is his helper (vv. 7, 13)

God is his refuge (vv. 8, 9)

2. God triumphs over his enemies.

Psalm 54:4,7 *Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life....For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.*

Compares the power of God to that of man, princes. God (using the King) cuts off the nations that surrounded him. Notice that God works through and in us! (David knew early that it was the name of the Lord that held all power – not the Goliaths.)

3. God disciplines him, but he is not dead. He's alive!

The Finality of God's Victory --The Lord has become my salvation.

The Psalmist is compelled to recount God's deeds. **Because** God is my strength, he is my song!

III. The Psalmist Enters the Gate

Open the gates of righteousness! (He wants to enter God's house to praise him there)

A. The Gate of the Lord – Only the Righteous Enter

Psalm 24 *Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.... Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.*

Isaiah 26:2 *Open the gates, that the righteous nation that keeps faith may enter in.*

B. The Right Hand of the Lord

Psalm 20:6 *Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.*

Psalm 98:1 *Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.*

Isaiah 41:10 *fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

Matthew 26:64 *you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.*

Mark 16:19 *The Lord Jesus... was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.*

Acts 7:55-56 *Full of the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.*

Romans 8:34 *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died- more than that, who was raised- who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

C. The Deeds of the Lord

Psalm 44:1-3 *O God, our fathers have told us what deeds you performed in the days of old: you with your own hand drove out the nations...not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm save them, but your right hand and your arm, and the light of your face, for you delighted in them.*

Psalm 77:10-13 *Then I said, "I will appeal to the years of the right hand of the Most High." I will remember the deeds of the LORD; your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God?*

D. The Name of the Lord and the House of the Lord

This is the destination of worship – up to the House of the Lord through him who comes in the name of the Lord. (v. 26)

IV. Let US Rejoice In Christ, the Name, Gate, Right Hand, Deeds and House of God all Come Together!

In this psalm, as the king and the people enter the gates, they become one body to worship God.

The psalmist king begins using the plural: Marvelous in **our** eyes; Let **us** rejoice; Save **us**; **we** pray; Give **us**; **we** bless; His light shines on **us**. Now the people respond by binding “the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!”

Why are we not destroyed by the glory cloud?

Why are we allowed through the gate?

Why will we live and not die?

How can we win through our battle against our enemies?

How can we claim the family name of God?

A. What God Has Done

Jesus was pressed all the way to and through death—rejected by the builders. When he died, that glory-cloud wrath of God poured out of his holy temple onto the sacrificial lamb, destroying his life. That was the only sacrifice able to purify king David, the people, the priests or any who “fear the Lord.”

But death couldn’t keep him. This rejected stone became the headstone, the foundation stone. This salvation day is celebrated here. On the basis of this salvation, so acquired, we, with the psalmist, by the hand of the Lord, enter the house of the Lord through the gate of the Lord in the name of the Lord and are able to participate in the deeds of the Lord!

B. Our Response

Hebrews 13:15 ¹⁵ *Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.*

The psalmist finishes with his own praise to God: MY God; I give thanks; MY God; I extol

Final Command to all God’s people: Give Thanks – “for his steadfast love endures forever theme of the worshiping people of God.

Join the festal procession!

1 Peter 2:4ff *As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ...you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

Will you speak God’s name this week? Will we offer our sacrifice of praise to the nations? His promises are sure.

Extra Passages for your edification:

Psalm 71:16-18 ¹⁶ With the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD I will come; I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone. ¹⁷ O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. ¹⁸ So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

Isaiah 12:1-6 You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation." With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. "Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

Isaiah 28:15-16 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have an agreement, when the overwhelming whip passes through it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter"; therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: 'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'

Isaiah 35:8 - 36:1 And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Acts 4:8-12 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead- by him this man is standing before you well. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Habakkuk 1:2-12 ² O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? ³ Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. ⁴ So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted. ⁵ "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told. ⁶ For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own. ⁷ They are dreaded and fearsome; their justice and dignity go forth from themselves. ⁸ Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves; their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour. ⁹ They all come for violence, all their faces forward. They gather captives like sand. ¹⁰ At kings they scoff, and at rulers they laugh. They laugh at every fortress, for they pile up earth and take it. ¹¹ Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men, whose own might is

Women in the Word, New Life Presbyterian Church: Psalms for the Heart

Psalm 118; Nov 30, 2016 – Rebecca Jones

their god!" ¹² Are you not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof.

Psalm 5:11-12 But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever **sing for joy**, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may **exult in you**. For you bless the righteous, O LORD; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

Acts 4:11-12 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."