



# Spoken Praise and Worship

## Review

In the last session we [introduced the series](#). We saw that the purpose of the series is to enable us all to have a more intimate relationship with God by providing some tools for connecting with him in our personal devotional times. As we connect with God, we are seeking the results of Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesians 3. His prayer is that God would strengthen us with power through his Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. Also that we would fully experience the love of Christ, and be filled to the top with God.

In this session we will look at our first tool for connecting more deeply with God. It is spoken praise and worship. But before we do, a little history lesson...

## First Earthly Dwelling Place of God

God's desire from the beginning has been to dwell with the people that He created. Way back in the Old Testament, he instructed his people to build a physical place where he could dwell among the people he loved. This was the place where people worshiped, sacrificed and in general related to God.

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.  
- Exodus 25:8

## Access to God

Of course they didn't have the direct access to God through Jesus that we have now. There were priests who were mediators between the people and God. In fact, God was so inaccessible that there was a special place in the sanctuary called the Holy of Holies where he dwelt. No one but the high priest could go there, and he could only go there just once a year to offer sacrifices on behalf of the people. There was a physical veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the sanctuary. In a way, that symbolized that even though God was present, he was so holy and we were so not holy that we couldn't get near Him.

So yes, God dwelt among his people, but the average person couldn't get up close and personal.

## Where Worship Happens

With that background of the sanctuary, let's look at what Psalm 150 says.

Praise God in his sanctuary; Praise him in his mighty heavens.  
- Psalm 150

Psalm 150 tells us to praise God who dwells both on earth as well as outside of his created universe. As for his dwelling on earth, it says to praise him in his sanctuary. That's the place that we just talked about from Exodus.

It is at that place of worship where the Israelites were to praise God. They were to praise him there because that is where they had access to him, remote as it was.

## New Dwelling Place of God

With Jesus' death on the cross that temple veil was torn. This symbolized our new access to God through Christ's death. This new access does not depend on physical location.

Also, recall Ephesians 3:16, 17 of the last session?

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

From this we know that we ourselves can be the dwelling place of God. The single physical dwelling place of the Lord has been replaced by the hearts of the group of people that believe and put their faith in Jesus, aka the church. His dwelling place is now in the core of us, in our hearts, and it is there where we can meet and praise him.

## Praising Him Today

So putting this all together, today we are encouraged to praise God as he dwells within us.

Praise God = Hallelujah (הללוּיָהּ) = halal (הללוּ) + Yah (יה)

Did you know that the word hallelujah comes from two words? The first, *halal*, means 'praise' and the second, *Yah* or *Jah*, is God's name. So hallelujah means "praise God". The Hebrew word *halal* means to shine (as in a star), make a show, or to boast, or to celebrate. It implies excited emotion connected with the object of praise. One of the translations used in the Hebrew dictionary for *halal* is actually 'rave'.

There are many psalms that encourage us to praise God. Often they use the term *sing praises*. If you enjoy singing, including when you are alone with God, and find it worshipful, that is fantastic. Some people are not that comfortable singing, even by themselves. That doesn't mean they have to miss out on praising God. We can also speak out praises to God.

This sounds like prayer and well, yes it is. Spoken praise prayer is a way of building relationship with God. This is what we will be looking at in this session. We will learn to speak praise to God in our times alone with him.

## Scripture and Sample Praise and Worship

Below is a collection of scriptures that we can use to start to develop this practice of spoken praise and worship. After each scripture is a sample praise. If you are in a group, each person can read a scripture and the corresponding sample praise. When you read the praise, try to read it slowly and deliberately and remember you are speaking to God. If in a group, meditate on what the other person is saying and echo the praise in your own heart.

### Jesus is the Word

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.  
- John 1:1-5

Sample Praise: Jesus, you are the Word. You have been with the Father since the beginning. You are God. You are worthy of all praise! Praise you, Jesus - you have made all things with the Father. You are life; you are the Light of the World. Thank you that your light reveals the Father to us. Thank you that darkness flees from your light. You are greater than the darkness of this world and I praise you that you have victory over the darkness.

## Jesus is supreme

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

- Col 1:15-20

Sample Praise: Lord Jesus, you perfectly reflect your Father. We know if we have seen you we have seen the Father as you have told us. You were seen when you were here on earth and I get to see you myself when you return in glory. You and the Father are one. You are together, united in the trinity which we can't understand, yet we marvel at.

Jesus, this physical universe was created by you and for you. It is all yours. It all belongs to you. Without you there would be nothing at all. You are above everything and nothing is more important than you yourself. People continuously try to understand the universe and yet you actually brought it into being out of nothing! Your power and authority is beyond our understanding.

Lord, you are the head of the church. You are the head of us who have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness into your kingdom. Thank you for your obedience to the Father's will for you by giving your life for us on the cross so we can be reconciled to the Father. We could not know the Father except through you.

## Jesus is glorious

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

- Rev 1:12-18

Sample Praise: Lord, your majesty and glory are beyond our comprehension. Even this picture of you defies description. You are too pure, too righteous for us to understand. We worship you because although we see glimpses of you, your true nature and character are far more beautiful than we can see. Your words are powerful and pure. Thank you that you have shared some of your words with us, and that we can begin to know you through the scriptures.

Thank you that even though we should die in your presence, you have made it possible for us to fellowship with you. Praise the Alpha and the Omega, who was and is and is to come! There is no one like you; you live forever!

## Jesus has many names

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- Isaiah 9:6

Sample Praise: Jesus, You have many names, and those names reveal to us who you are. Thank

you that you are our Wonderful Counsellor, the one who guides and leads us. Thank you that you know all things, and because you do, you can counsel us. You are the Mighty God, the powerful one, the one who has won the victory over sin! There is no one who can defeat you. Your strength is eternal, and your power complete.

How can the Son be the Everlasting Father? Though it is a mystery to us, we know that you are the exact representation of the Father, and you are everlasting – from the beginning to the end. Praise the Prince of Peace – the one who gives us peace with the Father, our creator. Your kingdom knows no end, and it brings peace to all. You will put an end to all war and fighting, oppression and fear. You are our Prince of Peace.

Jesus is humble and exalted

Who (Christ Jesus), being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Philippians 2:6-11

Sample Praise: Jesus, you are the humble servant king. Thank you for setting aside the honour and glory that are due you, and taking on our human form so that you could live among us. Thank you that you loved us so much that you were willing to leave your Father's side and come to earth...to be the Saviour of humankind.

Your name is higher than any other name; all will bow down and worship you. Your praise will be heard in heaven and on earth and under the earth – no one will fail to praise you! Thank you that you have shown us that you have won the victory, and that every created being will call you Lord.

## Jesus is heir of all things

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

- Hebrews 1:1-3

Sample Praise: Father, you have spoken from the very beginning of creation when you said "Let there be light." God, after you created Man you spoke with him in the garden. After we sinned and were separated from you, you continued to speak through your chosen prophets. Father, thank you that you didn't just leave us alone, but you sought relationship with us through your communications. God, your own son Jesus, through whom you made all things, is the precious one you have chosen to speak to us through. Jesus, who was flesh and blood like us and could literally speak our language. His words are real life to us. All of your creation keeps continuing on by His sustaining word.

God, unlike the prophets, your son Jesus is full of your glory, your brilliant glory that might blind us if we saw it. Your glorious Son has saved us from our sins and now sits with you in heaven. Thank you that you loved us that much to send the one you loved for our sake. Thank you both that you endured the pain of separation from each other so that we may be reconciled to you and live with you for eternity.



## Jesus is our perfect high priest

But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

- Hebrews 7:24-27

Sample Praise: Jesus, you are the perfect high priest: you are holy, without sin, the pure spotless Lamb, and we exalt you above all others. You have saved me and you constantly speak for me in the presence of your Father. That is so wonderful! I don't have to bring sacrifices so that God will forgive my sin; you have already taken care of that once and for all. Your life was the perfect sacrifice, and you gave it freely for me, and for everyone. Thank you that I don't have to worry about whether I'm saved or not...your salvation is eternal.

## God's love and grace are abundant

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

- Psalm 103:8-12

Sample Praise: Lord, your love astounds me. It is incomprehensible. Yes, you hate sin, but your anger will not persist. You have removed our sins from us through the death of your Son on the cross, put them so far away from us that we can't see them anymore. You don't see them anymore. Your love has wiped them away, and we can enter into the joy of your love. I praise you that your love is greater than your disgust of sin; you have spared us the punishment we deserve even though we could never come close to earning that reprieve. Your love abounds for those who fear you, who recognize you as Lord. Thank you that you have chosen me to be one who

knows you, for without your saving love I would be lost.

## Developing the Practice

Take this opportunity now to spend time alone with God doing spoken scripture-based praise and worship. You can use the verses we just went through. If you're in a group, separate and find your own quiet spot to be alone with God. Pick one of the scriptures and ignore the sample praise that goes with it. Read through the scripture and then speak out to God (silently if you wish) the truths of God that the scripture reveals. If you find you are struggling, feel free to read through the sample praise and see if God will use that to kick-start you into your own praises.

If you haven't done this before, try to take at least 15 minutes to continue in this space of praise. It may seem like a long time at first. If you feel you've exhausted one scripture, move on to another from the list above.

If you're in a group, when the time is up, you can meet back together and discuss how things went.

Tomorrow, when you have a quiet time with God, try to spend some time in spoken praise. If it seems like hard work, see if you can keep on for awhile as the habit forms. It will become something you desire to do as Christ dwells in you and you experience more of Christ's love according to Paul's prayer of Ephesians 3.