

THE PSALMS OF PRAISE

Purpose: To understand the Psalms of Praise as songs that celebrate God's character, greatness, works, kingship, mercy, and faithfulness.

I. What Are the Psalms of Praise?

The Psalms of Praise are songs and prayers that openly celebrate who God is, what He has done, and why He is worthy of worship. They focus primarily on God's character, greatness, faithfulness, power, holiness, and works.

Unlike psalms of lament, which center on sorrow and suffering, or psalms of thanksgiving, which respond to a specific deliverance, Psalms of Praise intentionally direct attention toward God and invite others to worship Him.

Key emphasis:

- God is worthy of praise.
- God's name is excellent and holy.
- God is Creator, King, Judge, Savior, and Shepherd.
- God's works reveal His power and faithfulness.
- Praise is both personal and communal.
- All creation is called to worship God.

II. Major Psalms of Praise

Psalm(s)	Primary Focus
Psalm 8	Praise for God's majesty in creation
Psalm 19	Praise for God's creation and His Word
Psalm 29	Praise for God's power and glory
Psalm 33	Praise for God's faithfulness and creative power
Psalm 47	Praise for God as the great King
Psalm 65	Praise for God's provision and forgiveness
Psalm 66	A call for all the earth to praise God
Psalm 67	Praise for God's blessing and salvation among the nations
Psalm 93	Praise for God's eternal reign
Psalms 96–100	Praise for God as King and Judge
Psalms 103–104	Praise for God's mercy and creation
Psalms 111–113	Praise for God's works, righteousness, and glory
Psalm 117	A universal call to praise
Psalm 135	Praise for God's greatness and sovereignty
Psalms 146–150	Calls for universal praise

III. Who Wrote the Psalms of Praise?

The Psalms of Praise were written by several individuals and worshiping communities. The Book of Psalms is a collection created over many generations.

- **David:** The most frequently identified writer. As king, musician, warrior, and worshiper, David praised God for His greatness, protection, mercy, kingship, and faithfulness. Examples traditionally connected to David include Psalms 8, 19, 29, 33, 65, 68, 103, and 145.
- **The Sons of Korah:** A Levitical family of musicians and worship leaders. Their psalms emphasize God's presence, the beauty of worship, Jerusalem, and God's position as King over all nations. Examples include Psalms 47, 84, 87, and 88.
- **Asaph:** A Levite, musician, and worship leader appointed during David's reign. Psalms connected to Asaph ultimately direct attention to God's holiness, justice, power, and sovereignty.
- **Moses:** Psalm 90 is traditionally attributed to Moses. It praises God's eternity and contrasts God's unchanging nature with human mortality.
- **Anonymous writers:** Many Psalms of Praise do not identify their authors. These psalms were preserved and used by Israel's worshiping community, reminding us that the focus is not on the worshiper but on God.
- **Temple worship leaders and Israel's worshiping community:** Some psalms were written or arranged for public worship and used by priests, Levites, musicians, singers, and the congregation.

IV. How Are the Psalms of Praise Structured?

1. Invitation to Praise — The psalm calls someone to worship: 'Praise the LORD,' 'Sing unto the LORD,' 'Give thanks,' or 'Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD.'
2. Reasons for Praise — The psalm explains why God deserves worship: He is great, holy, righteous, merciful, faithful, powerful, eternal, and good.
3. Description of God's Works — The psalm remembers creation, deliverance, provision, protection, mercy, justice, and the keeping of God's promises.
4. Wider Call to Worship — Many psalms call Israel, the nations, rulers, creation, and everyone who has breath to praise God.
5. Conclusion of Praise — The psalm closes with a renewed declaration of God's goodness, greatness, or eternal reign.

V. Why Were the Psalms of Praise Written?

- **To honor God for who He is:** They declare that God deserves worship because of His character, not only because of His blessings.

- **To celebrate God's creation:** Creation is presented as evidence of God's wisdom, majesty, and power.
- **To remember God's mighty works:** The psalms helped Israel remember God's deliverance, covenant, provision, protection, and faithfulness.
- **To proclaim God as King:** They affirm that God's reign is eternal, righteous, and greater than every earthly authority.
- **To lead the community in worship:** They gave the congregation shared words to celebrate God, teach future generations, and respond to His presence.
- **To invite the nations to know God:** Several psalms call all nations to recognize God's salvation and kingship.
- **To teach the people how to worship:** They model singing, shouting, music, clapping, bowing, giving thanks, declaring God's works, and living with reverence.
- **To keep God at the center:** They redirect attention away from human weakness and toward God's greatness and faithfulness.

VI. Central Messages of the Psalms of Praise

- God is worthy of praise at all times.
- God's greatness is revealed through His works.
- Praise is not private only; it is also communal and worldwide.
- God is the true King.
- Praise helps preserve faith by remembering God's faithfulness.
- All creation belongs in worship.

VII. Key Takeaway

The Psalms of Praise were written to turn the hearts of God's people toward worship. They celebrate God's identity, greatness, creation, mighty works, kingship, mercy, and faithfulness.

God is worthy of praise because of who He is and because of all He has done.