

LET GOD ARISE!

The Wondrous Cross #6

Prayer Guide for Kingdomtide • Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis



Come and See What God Has Done

Psalm 66.1-9

For That I'm Grateful

Don L. Davis • Adapted from Psalms 40.5

You, Lord God, have done
Many wonderful things, many marvelous things
You, my King, have done so many things for us
The thoughts You have for us
Lord, they cannot be numbered,
They cannot be ordered
No matter how I'd try
I couldn't count them all

And I would never be able to tell
About all the things that You've done for us
And for that, dear Lord, I'm grateful
And if I would try to declare them all
They are more than can be told
And for that, dear Lord, I'm grateful

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Come and See What God Has Done

What Praise Does: Shout for Joy to God, All the earth

Ps. 66.1-4 – Shout for joy to God, all the earth; [2] sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise! [3] Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. [4] All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name.”

Ps. 81.1 – Sing aloud to God our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob!

Ps. 95.1-2 – Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! [2] Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Ps. 98.4 – Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

Ps. 100.1-5 – Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! [2] Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! [3] Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. [4] Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! [5] For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Praise Is Singing (Musical Affirmation) and Saying (Verbal Affirmation)

Sing (musical affirmation): Songs are sung to God, not to each other per se!

Ps. 47.6 – Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Ps. 105.2-3 – Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! [3] Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!



Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

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Isa. 12.4-6 – 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. [5] Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. [6] Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

Rev. 5.13 – And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

Say (verbal affirmation) Ps. 66.3-4 – Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. [4] All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name.”

Ps. 22.28-29 – For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. [29] All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive.

Ps. 81.15 – Those who hate the Lord would cringe toward him, and their fate would last forever.

Ps. 107.2-3 – Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble [3] and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

Neh. 9.5-7 – Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, “Stand up and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. [6] You are the LORD,



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you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you. [7] You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham.”

1 Chron. 29.10-13 – Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. [11] Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. [12] Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. [13] And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.”

Ps. 72.18 – Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Ps. 96.3-5 – Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! [4] For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. [5] For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Ps. 106.2 – Who can utter the mighty deeds of the Lord, or declare all his praise?

Rev. 4.8-11 – And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”[9] And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, [10]



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the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

Why Praise Does: Come and See What God Has Done

Ps. 66.5-7 – Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man. [6] He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, [7] who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah

Ps. 47.2 – For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.

Ps. 65.5 – By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

Jer. 10.10 - But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.

Ps. 46.8 – Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth.

Ps. 66.16 – Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul.

Ps. 111.2 – Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.



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Ps. 126.1-3 – When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. [2] Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.” [3] The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.

Ps. 66.6-7 - He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, [7] who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah

Ps. 104.5-7 – He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. [6] You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. [7] At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.

Ps. 106.8-10 - Yet he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power. [9] He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, and he led them through the deep as through a desert. [10] So he saved them from the hand of the foe and redeemed them from the power of the enemy.

Ps. 136.13-14 – to him who divided the Red Sea in two, for his steadfast love endures forever; [14] and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Rev. 19.1-8 – After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, [2] for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.” [3] Once more they cried out, “Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.” [4] And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped



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God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” [5] And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great.” [6] Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. [7] Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; [8] it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

Who Does Praise: Bless Our God, O Peoples

Ps. 66.8-9 – Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard, [9] who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip.

Let the heavens praise him, Deut. 32.43 – “Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people's land.”

Let the Gentiles extol him, Rom. 15.10-11 – And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.” [11] And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”

As they did at the gathering of goods for the temple's construction, 1 Chron. 16.34 – Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

As they did at the temple's dedication, 2 Chron. 5.13 – and it 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



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good, for his steadfast love endures forever,” the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud.

As they did before they fought their battles, 2 Chron. 20.21 – And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, “Give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever.”

As they did when they returned from captivity, 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.

The Lord God Is the Source of Both Our Physical and Spiritual Lives

Acts 17.28 – for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are indeed his offspring.’”

Col. 3.3-4 – For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. [4] When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Bless the Lord!

Ps. 103.1-2 - Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! [2] Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Ps. 117.1-2 – Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! [2] For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!

Ps. 145.2 – Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.



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Ps. 146.2 – I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Matt. 11.25 – At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.”

Eph. 3.20-21 – Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. ■

Why Shout to God – Is He Deaf?

The story is told of a little boy who was kneeling by his bed with his mom to say his nighttime prayers. He began to shout at the top of his lungs, “Dear God, I’ve been real good this year so please let me get a new bicycle for my birthday.” His mom said, “Son, God’s not deaf; you don’t need to yell.” He said, “God’s not deaf, but Grandma is and she’s in the next room.”

THIS HOMELY and mildly humorous story speaks to a larger theological point for us who seek to advance the Kingdom of God in the cities of America. God everywhere in Scripture commands the redeemed to shout to him in song, in thanksgiving, and in blessing. It is clear he desires and demands noisy, raucous, and flat out full-volume kind of praise. This is his clear and spoken will from the prophets, psalmists, and apostles.

Yet, doesn’t this seem counter-intuitive? God isn’t deaf—why does he demand loud, noisy, shouting praise? Don’t many of us call our morning devotional encounter with the Lord a “Quiet Time,” and don’t many of us associate intimacy with the Lord with quiet Maranatha! music or the latest



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Tomlin or Passion tape turned up just barely enough to be heard while we, over coffee or tea, meditate on selected promises of God! Okay, I'm being sarcastic, but you have to admit, the point is given and ought to be taken. An entire generation of believers have connected depth and intimacy with God not with shouting and dancing, but with quietude and silence. As far as I know, I haven't read a book on the spiritual discipline of *shouting unto God with joy and rejoicing!* (Maybe you or I will actually be the first to write such a text!)

As we go through the Psalms this Kingdomtide, we encounter in the lectionary text a wonderful portion of a glorious psalm of thanksgiving, Psalm 66.1-9. A cousin to Psalm 65, both Psalms 65 and 66 appear to be associated with an unnamed festal celebration, and both highlight the psalmist's affirmation and blessing to the Lord. In the first section of Psalm 66, verses 1-12 show the *corporate* nature of praise, with the writer using only the first person plural ("us," "our"), while in the second section they employ a *personal* first person singular voice ("I," "me," and "my") in verses 13-20.

What Praise Does

To begin with, the psalm introduces us to *what* praise does: Shout for joy to God, all the earth (Ps. 66.1-4).

Ps. 66.1-4 – Shout for joy to God, all the earth; [2] sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise! [3] Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. [4] All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name." Selah

When it comes to praising the Lord, the appropriate *modus operandi* (usual way of behaving and operating) is to shout, to operate at full volume, too crank it up and make noise. The entire earth is challenged to respond in this



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way; shouting and noise, when it comes to the Lord's blessings, is an entirely and totally appropriate way to function! This is a normal and often-suggested approach to the Lord's praise. Here are a few representative texts:

Ps. 81.1 – Sing aloud to God our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob!

Ps. 95.1-2 – Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! [2] Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Ps. 98.4 – Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

Ps. 100.1 – Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

Singing as Musical Affirmation of God's Goodness and His Works

This psalm reveals the nature of true praise to God. The basic elements of praise involve both *singing* (musical affirmation of God's goodness and his actions) and *saying* (verbal affirmation of God's goodness and his actions). To sing is to put words to music, to carry a tune (if you dare!), to make melody with words as you croon. In a critical sense, this is not like singing little jolly tunes, not considering what the words mean, or singing little jingles because you like the melodies. These kinds of songs are joyful, but they are important. *Singing to God* is literally that—singing to God! This has nothing to do, by the way, with whether or not you have the talent to go to the next round on *American Idol* (isn't the name simply profound!); rather, we sing, however well we can, to the Lord for he is worthy of praise and thanks. These songs are sung to God, not for yourself or your audience primarily, or for your entertainment! "Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!" (Ps. 47.8). We are to sing to him, telling of all his wondrous works (Ps. 105.2-3), joining our songs with



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thanksgiving, shouting, and calling upon his name (Isa. 12.4-6). Because the Lord is in our midst, we simply cannot help ourselves, for “great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 12.6).

As believers in Christ, we know that one day, when the works of mission, justice, and discipleship are completed, the entire universe soon will join with us in an unbroken, cosmic chorus of shouting and praise:

Rev. 5.13 – And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

Saying as Verbal Confession of God’s Goodness and His Works

The other side of praise is *saying* or verbal confession of God’s person and work): Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. [4] All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name” (Ps. 66.3-4). According to Psalm 107.2-3, all those who have experienced God’s blessing and deliverance are blessedly obligated to say so: “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble [3] and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.” Blessing the Lord in words of affirmation, acknowledgment, and confession is a common occurrence among the people of God in the Old Testament: see how the Levites stood and blessed the Lord in Nehemiah 9.5-7, and how David blessed the Lord before the people in 1 Chronicles 29.10-13:

Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. [11] Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are



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exalted as head above all. [12] Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. [13] And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.”

We are blessed, and we say so—alone, with our families, in our small groups, in our services, wherever we gather. We bless the Lord for he alone is worthy (Ps. 72.18). We are to be unashamed and unmoved, ready to testify of God’s goodness and work to everyone. Literally, Psalm 96 defines worldwide evangelization is nothing more than declaring the glory of the Lord among the nations, and his marvelous works among all peoples (Ps. 96.3-5). Truly, the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Let’s be clear: if you could sing until your vocal cords dried up, or spoke until your tongue shriveled into a string, you could never sing or say enough about the Lord or what he has done for his creation, his covenant people Israel, or his Church. I am convinced that is why the highest beings ever created by God, with capacities eclipsing our own, the elect angels, rightly and joyfully never cease to acknowledge the beauty and glory of our God, or mention his mighty works for the children of humankind. Our God, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is simply *that good*. No one can fully recount all of his blessings, his covenant faithfulness, his lovingkindness, his great glory, and his marvelous redemption.

Ps. 106.2 – Who can utter the mighty deeds of the Lord, or declare all his praise?

Ps. 40.5 – You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you! I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.



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Just Can't Sing or Say Enough

While it may be impossible to say it all, heaven's main business is to acknowledge our God and his mighty works in creation and redemption. In his unique apocalyptic vision John is caught up to the throne room of the Most High, and there he witnesses the pageantry and wonder of heaven's praise to God on full display:

Rev. 4.8-11 – And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” [9] And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, [10] the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

To sing and to say, to worship and to confess, to make melody and to give testimony—these actions are paired in the believing community as appropriate responses to the goodness of the Lord.

The Why of Praise

The psalmist also gives us the *why* of praise: to acknowledge his deeds, to literally come and see what God has done, Psalm 66.5-7.

Ps. 66.5-7 – Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man. [6] He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, [7] who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah



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Praise is an invitation to rehearse, relive, and retrace the awesome deeds of God. The Lord Most High is *terrible* (to be feared, ESV) as a great king over all the earth (Ps. 47.2), and his works are awesome in every way as he works for his people (Ps. 65.5). As a God of infinite glory, wisdom, and might, it is appropriate that we revere the Lord in all things, for “the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation” (Jer. 10.10).

The fuel that makes our praise run is our recognition of God’s creative and saving acts in history, i.e., our historical and eschatological recitation of them in *anamnesis* (remembering and participating in what God has done in the past) and *prolepsis* (the “prophetic perfect” tense; remembering and participating in what God will do in the future). In creation, his covenant faithfulness with Israel, and his saving acts in the Incarnation, God’s works are seen for what they are: awesome, mighty, and unparalleled. We are told to “come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth” (Ps. 46.8), and to “come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul” (Ps. 66.18). Truly, we are even called to make the works of God our curricula and studies: “Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them” (Ps. 111.2).

Indeed, we are characters in God’s cosmic drama, surrounded by the awesome workings of God. His works have touched and transformed us, filling our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy (Ps. 126.1-3). As the psalmist says, “Yes, the Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.”

God of Creation and God of History

The worship of Israel and the Church are simply seasonal rhythms of remembrance and anticipation, recalling God’s awesome acts, and looking forward to his workings to come. He is the One who called Abraham, brought Jacob out of Egypt, and “turned the sea into dry land; they passed



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through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves” (Ps. 66. 6-7). In creation, in his redemption of his people, in the incarnation and resurrection of his Son, our God has revealed his works in history to be awesome, majestic, amazing.

This way of understanding God’s working is seen in his commands regarding the spiritual formation of his people, both in the OT and during this era of grace. The entirety of the Jewish sacred year (cf. Lev. 23 and Deut. 16) as well as the Christian calendar are anchored in recalling, reliving, and anticipating the works of God. In the former, all the rites and reenactments of God are connected with God’s acts in creation and redemption, e.g., celebration of the Sabbath, new moon, Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Booths.

Similarly, the Christian calendar of the ancient-undivided Church reflects its remembrance of God’s saving acts in Christ: Advent (his coming), Christmas (his birth), Epiphany (his revelation to the world), Lent (his humiliation, passion, and death), Easter (his resurrection, appearance, and ascension), and Pentecost (his sending of the Holy Spirit, his headship, oversight of his harvest, and the hope of his coming). In all things, we are a people that focus on God’s acts in history, and take our places as characters in his cosmic drama today. Spiritual formation is intimately tied to the historical acts of God’s revelation and redemption, all anchored in the people of God, all connected to ritual and celebration, all focused on God’s sovereign lovingkindness.

The Who of Praise

We now come to the final section, the main characters of praise, i.e., *who* does and will do praise. The psalm is clear that the peoples of the earth will one day give praise to the Lord God for his works:



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Ps. 66.8-9 - Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard, [9] who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip.

Throughout Scripture the writers give testimony that all the heavens and all the gods will bless the Lord for his mighty works (Deut. 32.43). Paul the apostle testifies that one day the Gentiles, those who are outside the covenant and commonwealth of Israel, can by faith in Christ join the praise chorus:

Rom. 15.10-11 – And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.” [11] And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”

In the spirit of his people, now through Christ, believing Gentiles are now his people and can give him glory as they did at the gathering of goods for the temple’s construction: “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!” (1 Chron. 16.34), and as they did at the Temple’s dedication: “and it 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, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud” (2 Chron. 5.13).

Let us acclaim him as they did before they fought their battles: “And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, “Give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever” (2 Chron. 20.21), and as they did when they returned from captivity: “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



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people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid” (Ezra 3.11). Let us bless the Lord for he has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip (Ps. 66.9), and is the source of physical lives and eternal life (Acts 17.28; Col. 3.3-4).

Can You Hear Yourself Shouting?

So, as it turns out, God is neither deaf nor is he a fan of demure, half-hearted, whispery praise. Our God hears just fine—especially when his people in the city, in spite of the destruction and defeat, the violence and oppression, the poverty and the pain, still have enough faith to believe that the Kingdom of God shall triumph, even in the dark cities of the world.

Can you hear yourself shouting as you praise and give thanks to the Lord for all he has done? Come and see what God has done, and you’ll just have to shout. In preparation, run to the store and get some Chapstick for your lips and some juice for your throat. Believe me, you’re gonna need them. ■

The Season after Pentecost (Kingdomtide): A Season of Christ’s Headship

Ps. 66.1-4 – Shout for joy to God, all the earth; [2] sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise! [3] Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. [4] All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name.” Selah



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Biblical Principle of the Season

During this Season after Pentecost, during this period where we acknowledge Christ's headship, let us both sing and say that our God reigns! Now exalted to the right hand of the Father, the risen and glorified Jesus must reign until all his enemies are placed under his feet. As those who by faith have experienced the blessing and power of God's grace in Christ, let us without shame and with boldness now confess Jesus as Lord, and the grace of God as available to all who will repent and believe in his name. Let us rediscover the power of the joyful shout unto God, whose deeds are awesome, whose glory is terrifying, and whose name is higher than all other names. As those commissioned to bear witness to God's saving acts in the city, let us joyfully, boldly, and skillfully sing and shout his praises as we bear the Good News to our neighbors in both word and deed. Jesus is Lord, and he is alive forevermore!

Let us pray fervently this season that God will make his glory known as we declare his salvation in the cities where we live, and may we be rejuvenated as we raise up laborers for the urban harvest, and continue to plant churches for his glory among the unreached in the great cities of the world.

Isa. 12.4-6 – 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. [5] Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. [6] Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

1 Chron. 29.10-13 – Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. [11] Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the



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kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. [12] Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. [13] And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.”

Ps. 72.18 – Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

An Example of This Season’s Teaching: The Author of Psalm 66

Ps. 66.5-7 – Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man. [6] He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, [7] who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah



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