

Psalms 149:1 ¶ Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints.

Hallelujah! = Praise yet the LORD!

The psalmist opens with a big Hallelujah! He then urges the people to sing a new song to the LORD as they sing His praise together. The word for “new” makes reference to being “fresh, rebuilt and repaired” as well as new. As I thought about this, it made me think that the reference was more to the heart of the person singing than the actual song. We can sing an old song with a renewed heart of worship and praise that actually makes an old song seem new. I believe it is the heart of the person singing that gives meaning to the song being sung. It is wonderful to join with other saints in singing God’s praise; however, even then, the heart of each individual makes it special before the LORD.

It is also beautiful when truly “new” songs are composed to honor the LORD. I know it gives me great joy to write a new poem that expresses my heart before the LORD at any given time. The truth is that it helps me experience a more intimate connection with Him because it feels like He is my co-author as I pray through the process.

Psalms 149:2 Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

Psalms 149:3 Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

Psalms 149:4 For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.

The psalmist is obviously addressing the people of Israel as he encourages them to rejoice in their Creator, the true King of Israel, the children of Zion. He encourages them to express their praise in dance and song and with instruments. The truth is that the LORD is delighted by His people, those that choose to trust and obey Him.

The word for “beautify” was interesting; it included the thought of boasting and glorifying. It gives me the picture of a proud parent that is eager to brag about His kids and immediately brought to mind Job. It’s like He couldn’t wait to draw Satan’s attention to Job because He knew that Job would honor Him would not yield to the devil’s attempt to get Him to deny His faith in God.

Job 1:8 “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”

I can't help but wonder if He can brag about me in the same way. I would certainly like to think I would pass the test. Thinking—Am I more like Peter or Job?

Matthew 26:34-75 “Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice....And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.”

The beautiful truth is that every person that places their faith in the LORD, will emerge as an overcomer and experience God's salvation—as did both Job and Peter.

Psalms 149:5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.

Psalms 149:6 ¶ Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;

Psalms 149:7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

Psalms 149:8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

Psalms 149:9 To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

Yes, the context is still addressing the people of Israel, but the application is valid for all who believe in God as their LORD. The psalmist again encourages the saints, those trying to live in obedience to the LORD, to rejoice in the honor that is theirs as God's chosen people (which applies to the Jewish people and to those who are part of the true church today) and sing praises to Him aloud from their beds. In other words, we should always be praising God.

As they praised God as earnestly and sincerely as they knew how, the psalmist provides specific exhortation to stay prepared to fight the enemy, as indicated by the reference to the two-edged sword. A two-edged sword cuts both ways, allowing it to be far more effective in accomplishing the objective of the one wielding it. According to the psalmist, those objectives included:

- Executing vengeance upon the heathen
- Executing punishment upon wicked people

- Binding kings and their nobles with chains of iron
- Executing judgment according to God's law

The fact that this instruction is directed to all the people of God is a bit confusing. Scripture clearly tells us that vengeance belongs to God.

Romans 12:19 "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

It also declares that we are to be governed by the authorities ordained of God.

1 Peter 2:13–16 "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

This obedience to governing authorities is only to be ignored when we are commanded to disobey God's word.

Acts 5:29 "We ought to obey God rather than men."

I think the key difference is in application to Israel prior to the coming of Jesus to institute a new covenant based on grace rather than the law, the covenant that applies to the believer today. The weapons we are to use against our enemies are identified for us in Paul's letter to the Ephesians."

Ephesians 6:12–17 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God...."

And I think it is no coincidence that God's word is compared to a two-edged sword.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hallelujah!