

The Call for Universal Praise

Psalm 148:1-14

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

June 28, 2023 p.m.

Introduction: Psalm 148 is the third of the closing Hallelujah psalms which end the Psalter. Three weeks ago we considered Psalm 146, which I entitled “Praise to God & Trust in God.” We saw there the psalmist’s resolve, his reasons, & his reaffirmation to praise & trust God. Here in Psalm 148 we find the word “*praise*” used 13 times in 14 verses. This emphasizes not only our privilege but our responsibility to worship & praise our God. Some see 2 stanzas here: Heavenly praise (:1-6) & Earthly praise (:7-14). But I divide it into 3 stanzas: Heavenly praise (:1-6); Earthly praise (:7-10); & “Humanly” praise (:11-14). Either way, this psalm is a call for universal praise.

I. Heavenly praise (:1-6)

[Examples of heavenly praise can be found in Isaiah 6; Daniel 7:9-10; & Revelation 5:11-14.]

A. Praise **by** His creation (:1-4) >

1. By celestial (heavenly) beings – “*angels, hosts.*”
2. By celestial (heavenly) bodies (luminaries) – “*sun & moon...all ye stars of light.*”
3. By celestial (heavenly) waters – “*waters that be above the heavens*” (cf. Gen. 1:6-8 & Psalm 104:3).

B. Praise **for** their creation (:5-6) >

1. The command of creation:
 - a. Genesis 1:3, “*And God said...*”
 - b. Psalm 33:6-9, “*By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; & all the host of them by the breath of His mouth...*”
2. The control of creation:
 - a. His preservation (or sustaining – see Colossians 1:16-17).
 - b. His “perpetual maintenance.”

II. Earthly praise (:7-10)

A. Praise by God’s creatures (:7, 10) >

1. “*Dragons*” – some suggest sea or mythical creatures; possibly dinosaurs?
2. “*Deep*s” – the habitat of sea creatures.
3. Domestic & wild animals; insects & birds (:10).

B. By God’s “inorganic” creation (elements of climate?) (:8) >

1. “*Fire, & hail.*”
2. “*Snow, & vapor.*”
3. “*Stormy wind fulfilling His word.*”

C. By God’s “material” creation (:9) >

1. “*Mountains, & all hills.*”
2. “*Fruitful trees, & all cedars.*”

III. “Humanly” praise (:11-14)

A. Representatives of human praise (:11-12) >

1. Those of all **rank**: “*kings, all people, princes, judges.*”
2. Those of all **sex** – “*young men, maidens.*”
3. Those of all **age** – “*old men, & children.*”

B. Reasons for human praise (:13-14) >

1. God’s excellent name (the exaltation of God’s **name**):
 - a. Stands for the Lord Himself.
 - b. Speaks of His transcendent majesty.
2. God’s existing power (the exaltation of God’s **people**):
 - a. The mystery of history – why did God choose Israel?
“This choice of Israel is regarded as having a central & universal significance for the whole life of creation. This is not the view of any historians except the Biblical, but the whole revelation of the Bible rests squarely on the fact” (Scroggie).
 - b. The marvel of history – how God preserves Israel.
Summary: The psalm closes with Israel rejoicing in her restoration of national existence (post-exile?). “They are a people *near & dear* unto God, as kinsfolk are to each other” (Plumer).
See Exodus 19:6; Ephesians 2:13; & James 4:8.

Conclusion: Reflect upon this universal call to praise. Should not this be a pattern for our prayer life - Praise before petition? How do we explain the praise of God’s creation – by sun, moon, stars, etc.- since they have no will or power of choice & no vocal articulation? “The reality in the description is in the fact that they praise the Lord by fulfilling (:8) the end for which they were brought into existence (Gen. 1); & angels & men can praise Him in no other way” (Scroggie). Compare Psalm 19: 1-6. If praise is given by the mightiest angel & the minutest insect, how much more should we as His creatures, made in His image, offer our praise to God? How do we, as humans, ultimately praise the Lord? Is it not by fulfilling the purpose for which we were created? “What is the chief end of man: To glorify God & to enjoy Him forever.” Is the average man or woman fulfilling the purpose for which he/she was created? “It is only sinful men & apostate angels who of all God’s creatures fail to put honor upon their Maker” (Plumer). Obviously the first step is salvation, for God “*will have all men to be saved, & to come unto the knowledge of the truth*” (I Timothy 2:4 & cf. II Peter 3:9). But what about the average believer? Is he/she fulfilling the purpose for which they were created? How about you & me? Could our testimony be that expressed by Paul in II Corinthians 5:14-15, “*For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead: And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, & rose again*”?

Will you & I learn these lessons from Psalm 148?