

“I Will Praise Thee, O Lord”
Psalm 9
(Preached at Trinity, November 15, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. One of the great characteristics of the Psalms is the element of praise. In fact, each of the last five psalms begin with, “Praise ye the LORD”
Up to this point, however, we haven’t had a single praise psalm, although Psalm 8 comes close –
Psalm 8:9 – “O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!”
2. Psalm 9 is our first true Psalm of praise, although only the first part is devoted exclusively to praise.
3. What is praise? It is one of the many words that we toss around without giving it much thought. David says here: “I will praise *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart”
What is he saying?
 - A. The dictionary definition is: “the act of expressing approval or admiration”
But is that sufficient?
 - B. The Hebrew words shed some more light on it.
 1. The common word for praise, which is the word used here is: **יָדָה** *yadah* - to throw, shoot, cast (it can refer to shooting an arrow)
We can see from this that praise is something we lift up towards God with great energy. **יָדָה** also carries with it the idea of thanksgiving.
 2. Another word for praise is **הִלָּל** - to shine – This is where we get the word, hallelujah. We can catch a glimpse of the glory in praise. In praise we are magnifying the glory and splendor of God.
 3. We can find both words used in 1 Chronicles 16:4
1 Chronicles 16:4 – “And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank **יָדָה** and praise **הִלָּל** the LORD God of Israel:”
 4. So we can see that praise is the lifting up of our hearts in thanksgiving towards God glorifying Him in His excellence.
 5. Most Christians today believe that praise is something that is done with music. Many churches today have praise bands and praise leaders. Praise *can* accompany music. Remember, the Psalms were meant to sing. But music is not the essential element in praise. Adoring God in thanksgiving is the chief element.
David praises God in both word and song. We can see this in **Verses 1-2**
4. Thanksgiving results in praise. The life of the Christian should be that of continual praise. God is worthy to be praised. He loves the praises of His children.
David is expressing praise for all of God’s mighty acts of deliverance.
5. The psalm also begins with a superscription:
“To the chief Musician upon Muthlabben, A Psalm of David.”
 - A. Like the psalms that preceded it, this psalm is introduced as a Psalm of David.

- B. “upon Muthlabben” – like many of the superscriptions, the meaning of this word is largely unknown. This is the only psalm where it is found. The Hebrew literally means “death” or “death of a son.”
6. Some believe that Psalms 9 & 10 were originally joined together.
- A. The Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate joins them together.
- B. From Psalm 3 to Psalm 32 Psalm 10 is the only one lacking a superscription.
- C. We can see an acrostic in the Hebrew where the beginning of each line or stanza begins with consecutive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Other acrostic psalms include Psalms 37, 111, 112, and of course Psalm 119.
In Psalms 9-10 the acrostic isn’t perfect. The dalet is missing in Psalm 9 and Psalm 10 is missing three letters and two are reversed.
- D. In favor of keeping them separate, the Hebrew text separates them. Even if they were originally part of a longer poem they were separated before the Hebrew text was completed and canonized.
In addition, the themes of these two psalms are very different.
Psalm 9 is a praise hymn and Psalm 10 is a lament.
7. This psalm is divided into two sections:
David’s praise to God for past deliverance – **Verses 1-12**
David’s prayer to God for future deliverance – **Verses 13-20**
- I. David’s praise to God for past deliverance – **Verses 1-12**
- A. David begins with high expressions of praise
1. “with my whole heart”
 - a. David’s praise came forth with the highest of emotion and passion. He sang with loudness and exuberance and he spoke with passion
 - b. His entire being is thrown into this praise of God
Does this characterize the praise of our church? Do we sing exuberance and enthusiasm and declare Christ with passion
 2. In this psalm we find David praising God individually
 - a. In many of the Psalms, as we shall see, David calls the entire congregation to join with him in corporate praise.
Psalm 21:13 – “Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.”
Psalm 22:22 – “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.”
Psalm 34:3 – “O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.”
Psalm 35:18 – “I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.”
 - b. God desires the corporate worship of His people.
 3. “I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.”
 - a. The word translated “show forth” means “to number or count or recount. To rehearse or declare”
By “show forth” David is saying he counting the marvelous works of God.

- b. There are two reasons for this.
 - First, we recount the mighty works of God so that we can praise Him.
 - Second, we recount the mighty works of God so we can declare them to others – to speak often about God’s wondrous works and infinite greatness.
 - 4. “I will be glad and rejoice” – the words for “glad” and “rejoice” are very similar in meaning. They describe a highest expressions of joy and happiness.
 - a. Does God bring you joy?
 - b. A better question, do you find your full happiness in Christ, or are you looking for something else?
- B. David recounts God mighty acts of deliverance
1. **Verses 3-6** – Victory over his enemies
 - a. David continually placed it in the context of righteousness and justice
 - b. **Verses 3-4** – God maintained David’s righteousness and vindicated him maintaining his just cause
 - c. **Verses 5-6** – God rebuked the wicked and destroyed them.
 2. The psalms are filled with imprecatory statements and prayers in which the psalmist is calling down God’s judgment.
 - a. On one hand we are to love and pray for our enemies
Matthew 5:44 – “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”
 - b. On the other hand, David is contrasting righteousness and wickedness. His desire is for God to destroy all wickedness from the face of the earth.
 - c. We too pray for this. “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”
Of course we desire this chiefly through regeneration, but we also want God’s justice and the ultimate removal of His enemies.
 - d. Our ultimate foe is Satan whom we want to see destroyed under the mighty hand of God
 3. **Verses 7-8** – God’s judgments are right and just – David praised God for His just judgment
 - a. David loved justice and we should too
 - b. God is a lover of justice
Micah 6:8 – “O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”
 4. **Verses 9-10** – David praises God for His faithful protection of those who trust Him.
 1. David knew times of great trial and affliction. He knew what it was like to be surrounded by great enemies. But God was always his refuge and mighty defense.
This is one of the major themes in the psalms

2. God is a sure defense of all who trust Him. We should praise Him for His mighty protection. He has promised us His abiding presence
5. **Verses 11-12** – David concludes this section with another volley of praise as he finishes recounting God’s might hand of deliverance.
 1. Now David is calling for praise. He is preaching to the congregation: Sing forth God’s praises who dwells in Zion, Declare His mighty deeds.
 2. He is worthy of all praise and honor
Revelation 4:11 – “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power. . .”

Having lifted up his voice of praise for God’s great deliverance in the past David now turns his attention to God for future protection. We never presume upon God. We praise Him for the past and petition Him for the future. This section begins and ends with prayer

II. David’s prayer to God for future deliverance – **Verses 13-20**

A. There are two petitions:

1. A prayer for mercy – **Verses 13-14**
 - a. David petitions God to continue to consider His trials so that David might continue to declare God’s marvelous works
 - b. Of course, we will praise Him in all things but it is glorious to be able to continually declare His might works in our lives.
2. A prayer for God rise up in judgment upon the wicked – **Verses 19-20**
 - a. David is praying that men might tremble under the mighty hand of God that they might know their weakness
 - b. This is our prayer, both for individuals and nations
 - (1) We pray that God might work in the life of individuals, of our lost family members that they might be brought to their knees before God.
 - (2) We also pray that God might humble our nation. We pray for this during disasters like 9-11 and Katrina, and economic trials. Our prayer is that all men might know just how weak and helpless they are.

B. Sandwiched between these two petitions are several statements concerning the state of those who will not turn to God. These are statements worthy of our consideration. They are much like proverbs.

David even places a pause for meditation at the end of **Verse 16**.

1. **Verse 15-16** – much of the suffering of human beings is of their own doing.
They are sunk down into the pit that they have dug.
Think of the debt that people have gotten themselves into.
Think of the diseases that are the result of bad choices and sinful lifestyles
Think of the heartache brought through gambling, or addictions
Think of the divorce and broken homes due to selfishness and sin
How much more is this true for those who have sought to dig a pit for others. Their own wickedness and plotting will come back to them with a vengeance. May they tremble at the thought:

Psalm 9:16 – “The LORD is known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth”

David pauses here so that we can consider the depth of this: Higgsaion – meditation

2. **Verse 17** – The wicked shall be turned into hell.
 - a. The word here is sheol – the abode of the dead. It points to the place where there is not praise of God – the abode of the wicked.
 - b. We know this place as hell, the terrible place of outer darkness, of unquenchable fire.
 - c. This is the abode of the wicked. It should cause every man to set aside his wickedness and cast himself upon the mercies of God.
Thomas Watson – “It is inextinguishable; though the wicked shall be choked in the flames, yet not consumed (Revelation 20:10); "And the devil was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Behold the deplorable condition of all ungodly ones in the other world, they shall have a life that always dies, and a death that always lives: may not this affright men out of their sins, and make them become godly? unless they are resolved to try how hot the hell fire is.”
 - d. Although individuals will be cast into hell nations are judged of God upon the earth. They are counted among the wicked and cursed of God.
Psalm 33:12 – “Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”
3. **Verse 18** – a statement of God’s mercy upon the oppressed and afflicted.
Isaiah 1:17 – “Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”

Conclusion:

1. God is our ever present stronghold. He has always defended us. He always will.
2. God is worthy to be praised. No one has ever loved us like He does. No one will ever defend us like He does. Think of the many times He has proved Himself mighty in your life. Praise Him!
3. As you continue to face affliction pray to Him. See Him that He will continue to defend you.
4. And don’t forget the evangelistic aspect of David’s praises.
Declare His greatness to everyone you meet. He is worthy to be praised.
And pray always the petition of David:
Psalm 9:20 – “Put them in fear, O LORD: *that* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men.”