

The Psalms (Lesson 26)

Introduction:

1. The book of Psalms is a collection of 150 poems, songs, and prayers, composed over a long period of time by a number of people who wrote under a variety of circumstances.
2. Because of their beginning and concluding exhortations [*"Praise ye the Lord"*], the last 5 psalms (146-150) are designated as "Hallelujah Psalms."
3. This lesson is a study of Psalms 149-150.
4. According to Luke 24:44, the Psalms are a part of the Old Testament Scriptures.
5. Since this is the case, we must study the Psalms carefully because they *"were written for our learning"* (Romans 15:4).
6. Although a tremendous amount of valuable information can be learned from the Psalms, we must "rightly divide" them as we study (2 Timothy 2:15).
7. This is especially important as we examine the ways in which God's people were exhorted to offer praise to Him in the Psalms.

Discussion:

- I. (Psalm 149) ISRAEL IS EXHORTED TO PRAISE GOD
 - A. After the opening exhortation, the writer called upon Israel to *"sing unto the Lord a new song."*
 1. On a number of occasions the Israelites sang songs after their enemies were defeated.
 - a. (Exodus 15) A song was sung after the Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea.
 - b. (Judges 5) Deborah and Barak sang a song after defeating the Canaanites.
 2. Notice how several references to military victory are made in vs.6-9.
 - B. (vs.1c) The writer called for the Lord to be praised *"in the congregation of saints."*
 - C. (vs.4) God deserves such praise because of the blessings He provides, especially *"salvation."*
 - D. The writer associated "joy" with praise being offered to God (vs.2, 5).
 - E. (vs.3) The writer called upon Israel to praise God with dancing as well as with instruments, including the timbrel and harp.
 - II. (Psalm 150) EVERYONE IS EXHORTED TO PRAISE GOD
 - A. After the opening exhortation, the writer called for God to be praised *"in his sanctuary."*
 - B. (vs.6) This appeal is for all living beings.
 - C. (vs.1c-2) God deserves such praise because of His power and greatness.
 - D. (vs.3-5) The writer called for God to be praised with dancing as well as with instruments, including the trumpet, psaltery, harp, timbrel, stringed instruments, organs, and cymbals.

 - III. ADDITIONAL MATTERS
 - A. The Israelites used instruments when praising God (1 Chronicles 15:16, 19, 28; 25:1, 6).
 - B. Praising God with instruments is mentioned many times in the Psalms.
 1. 81:1-2
 2. 98:4-6
 3. 137:2
 4. 147:7
 - C. For those who appeal to the Psalms for authority to use instruments in worship today, they also mention offering animal sacrifices (Psalm 66:13-15).
 - D. Are Christians to praise God with dancing and with mechanical instruments today?
 1. Jesus gave His guidelines for Christian worship in John 4:23-24.
 2. Christians are instructed to *"sing"* (1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
 3. Christians are to only say and do those things authorized by Christ (Colossians 3:17).
 4. We must not alter the Lord's Word in any way (Revelation 22:18-19).