

Sharing Praise Across Centuries

Thomas Robinson, "Lost in Praise 2," August 22, 2010

Psalm 96:1-13

- ¹ Oh sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth!
- ² Sing to the LORD, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
- ³ 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.
- ⁶ Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
- ⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
- ⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!
- ⁹ Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!
- ¹⁰ Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."
- ¹¹ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
¹² let the field exult, and everything in it!
- Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
¹³ before the LORD, for he comes,
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness,
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Hebrews 12:1-2

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Numbers 6:22-27

- ²² The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²³ "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,
- ²⁴ *The LORD bless you and keep you;*
²⁵ *the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;*
²⁶ *the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*
- ²⁷ "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

Psalm 8:1 (KJV) [To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.]

¹ O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!
who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Psalm 100:1-5

- ¹ 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.

Romans 15:8-13

⁸ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "*Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.*" [Psa 18:49]

¹⁰ And again it is said, “*Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.*” [Deut 32:43]

¹¹ And again, “*Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.*” [Psa 117:1]

¹² And again Isaiah says, “*The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.*” [Isa 11:10] ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Joining the Long Chorus

The praise of God has always been the nourishment of God’s people. By telling of God we also tell the story that defines our lives and shapes our energies, our hope, our peace.

Expressions of God’s praise change from age to age and culture to culture but also unite people across barriers. We become one body as we share one faith in the One God.

The Biblical story is very specific and universal: God’s promise to Abram to all nations.

Early Christians Jew and Gentile worshiped through the praise of ancient Israel. For Paul the heart of the Gospel is seen as Gentiles and slaves join praise as children of Abraham.

“Seek Ye First” based on Jesus’ words and Moses’. “New Hallelujah” - New Song.

The Meditations of Christians through the Centuries

14: Shepherd (576), by Clement of Alexandria, trans. from Greek “Instructor.” Oldest known Christian hymn outside scripture. Henry Dexter, congregational minister, MA.

3: Holy God (239) Latin: *Te Deum Laudamus*, attrib to Nicetas of Remesiana c.380 though some parts may go back to Cyprian (c.250). Gregorian chant through the middle ages, a central part of monastic worship. Ignaz Franz, 1771: German translation: Grosser Gott. Clarence Walworth, Plattsburg, NY, 1853: Attorney and priest. Also 9: We Praise (804).

10: Be Thou (70), Celtic Christianity from the “dark ages” when so much was preserved in Ireland. From c. 750, though some attribute it to Dallan Forghaill, Irish poet (6th cent.). Translated by Irish scholar Mary Byrne, 1905, put into verse by Eleanor Hull, 1912.

11: O Sacred (484). 14th cent Latin hymn *Salve Caput*. Meditation on Body of Jesus. Trans. to German. Renaissance tune used by J.S. Bach in St. Matthew Passion. Trans. into Eng. By James Alexander, minister of 5th Ave. Presbyterian Ch in NYC.

The Renewal of Congregational Singing

13: All People (17) William Kethe, Scots minister in exile in Geneva. Music from Loys Bourgeois for Psa 134, Genevan Psalter. Psa 100, Beginnings of Congregational singing. 1562 Old Version Psalter of Sternhold & Hopkins. Songs “lined out.” Poor singing.

15: The Lord (643) Isaac Watts . Dissenting minister. Created new “Psalms in the Language of the New Testament” (1719). New hymns. Charles Wesley wrote many.

A Distinctive Voice within an Everchanging Tradition

12: Be With (40) Thomas Chisholm (Methodist), Lloyd Sanderson (Ch. of Christ). Gospel tradition of shape note music intended for congregation as chorus: 4-part harmony. All joining in creating the music. Emphasis on participation rather than performance.

7: O Lord (486) and 16 The Lord Bless (631): beautiful music in the a cappella tradition. Reaching back to the 13th cent. B.C. - we join the long Chorus of Praise to God!

