



**“Amazed”**

## Praise - Hallelu

- Infused with gratitude, honor, and reverence.



God creates and preserves that which God has created forever. The Hebrew word for praise that is used by the psalm writer is *Hallelu*. This word can be translated as praise infused with gratitude, honor, and reverence. It is a command!

In the first part of Psalm 148, the call to praise comes first to those things above: heavens, heights, angels, sun, moon, stars -- "Let them praise the name of the Lord" because the Lord has created you and fixed your bounds. The Bible understands this as good news, because the alternative is chaos. Water out of bounds brings floods and tsunamis. Sun and moon out of bounds would destroy all life -- including the sun and moon themselves. Creation gives life, chaos kills.



## **Romans 1:20**

- Paul suggests that God's, "eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made," from the beginning.

**Praise the Lord...because God has raised up a horn for his people.**



"Let them praise the name of the Lord...because God has raised up a horn for his people."  
But why would anyone else care about Israel?  
...The Christmas story proclaims that it is precisely these others who show up at the stable of Bethlehem to worship this God in human form – a baby born in a manger. The Old Testament argued, as far back as the call to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 that God had to begin in a particular place like Israel in order to become once again a blessing for all.

## **Strength will rise, when we wait upon the LORD!**

- ▶ Hannah & Mary, lowly nobodies, both recognize that through them, God is doing something **amazing** for Israel and all people!

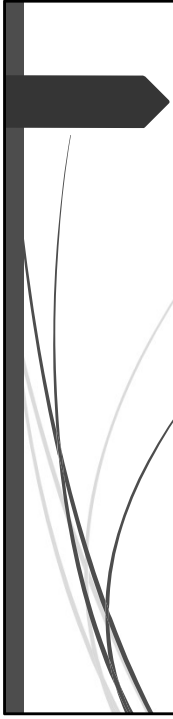


God raises up a "horn" for his people, sings the psalm -- the horn of the ox or the ram that is the symbol of power throughout the Old Testament. Hannah had praised the strength of that horn, raised up for her in her distress (1 Samuel 2:1), but then saw that same strength given to God's anointed king. Later, Mary, mother of Christ, of course, sang Hannah's song (Luke 1:46-55), wondering at that same strength that is now to be brought into the world through her. Hannah and Mary, lowly nobodies, both recognize that through them, God is doing something amazing for Israel and all people, for sun and stars, daffodils and dogwoods, lakes and fish, for kings and paupers, for the earth and all its creatures. Let God's strength be found here, sings the Psalm -- here the God of Israel, of Bethlehem, who is also the God of the moon and stars brings salvation to where Mary sings.

## **Wake up and praise the Lord with honor and reverence!**



The book of Revelation reveals a sequence of earth-shaking events heralded by angels sounding a series of seven trumpet blasts. The seventh angel's sounding of the last trumpet signifies that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Revelation 11:15). Perhaps what the Psalmist is after here is a wake up call. That which can be perceived by human senses is only a fraction of what is presently occurring at any given moment.

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- ▶ God provides a King endowed with justice and righteousness.
  - ▶ God desires for us to have prosperity along with righteousness.
  - ▶ For those who are in need, God pledges to defend and save, deliver and take pity upon.
  - ▶ God rescues us!

The God who was, is, and will always be is beyond human capacities to understand and yet can be recognized in part because people have been created by this very same God. The psalms place the faithful close to the heart of God. Perhaps this is a reminder not to lose sight of our special place in the order of the universes that God has created.

Now the other scripture for today, Psalm 72, reinforces that our place is special – for what God has done is for us.

God has provided a King for us in v 1 - Endowed with justice and righteousness. God desires in v3 for us to have prosperity along with righteousness. For those who are in need, God pledges in verse 4 & 12, 13,14 to defend and save – deliver and take pity upon. God rescues us! I am amazed! God cares about you and I – not because God needs us, nor our praise, but desires us to choose to accept His mercy and love! I am amazed!



**All nations will be blessed through  
Christ, and they will call him blessed.**

► Praise be to the Lord God,  
the God of Israel,  
who alone does marvelous deeds.