
PSALM 150: 1 Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary! Praise him in his heavens for his acts of power!

A general exhortation to praise God, Psa 150:1, Psa 150:2. With the trumpet, psaltery, and harp, Psa 150:3. With the timbrel and dance, stringed instruments and organs, Psa 150:4. With the cymbals, Psa 150:5. All living creatures are called upon to join in the exercise, Psa 150:6.

This Psalm is without title and author in the Hebrew, and in all the ancient versions. It is properly the full chorus of all voices and instruments in the temple, at the conclusion of the grand Hallelujah, to which the five concluding Psalms belong.

Verse 1

Praise God in his sanctuary - In many places we have the compound word יה-הללו halelu-yah, praise ye Jehovah; but this is the first place in which we find אל-הללו halelu-el, praise God, or the strong God. Praise him who is Jehovah, the infinite and self-existent Being; and praise him who is God, El or Elohim, the great God in covenant with mankind, to bless and save them unto eternal life.

In his sanctuary - in the temple; in whatever place is dedicated to his service. Or, in his holiness - through his own holy influence in your hearts.

The firmament of his power - Through the whole expanse, to the utmost limits of his power. As רקיע rakia is the firmament of vast expanse that surrounds the globe, and probably that in which all the celestial bodies of the solar system are included, it may have that meaning here. Praise him whose power and goodness extend through all worlds; and let the inhabitants of all those worlds share in the grand chorus, that it may be universal.

PSALM 150: 2 Praise him for his mighty acts! Praise him according to his excellent greatness!

Verse 2

For his mighty acts - Whether manifested in creation, government, mercy or justice.

His excellent greatness - כרב גדלו kerob gudlo, according to the multitude of his magnitude, or of his majesty. After the manyfoldness of his mickleness - Anglo-Saxon. After the mykelnes of his greathede - Old Psalter. Let the praise be such as is becoming so great, so holy, and so glorious a Being.

PSALM 150: 3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet! Praise him with harp and lyre!

Verse 3

The sound of the trumpet - שופר sophar, from its noble, cheering, and majestic sound; for the original has this ideal meaning.

With the psaltery - נבל nebel; the naba, a hollow stringed instrument; perhaps like the guitar, or the old symphony.

And harp - כנור kinnor, another stringed instrument, played on with the hands or fingers.

PSALM 150: 4 Praise him with tambourine and dancing! Praise him with stringed instruments and flute!

Verse 4

Praise him with the timbrel - תוף toph, drum, tabret, or tomtom, or tympanum of the ancients; a skin stretched over a broad hoop; perhaps something like the tambarine. Anglo-Saxon; the glad pipe. Taburne; Old Psalter.

And dance - מחול machol, the pipe. The croude or crowthe: Old Psalter; a species of violin. It never means dance; see the note on Psa 149:3. Crwth signifies a fiddle in Welsh.

Stringed instruments - מנינים minnim. This literally signifies strings put in order; perhaps a triangular kind of hollow instrument on which the strings were regularly placed, growing shorter and shorter till they came to a point. This would give a variety of sounds, from a deep bass to a high treble. In an ancient MS. Psalter before me, David is represented in two places, playing on such an instrument. It may be the sambuck, or psaltery, or some such instrument.

Organs - עוגב ugab. Very likely the syrinx or mouth organ; Pan's pipe; both of the ancients and moderns. The fistula, septem, disparibus nodis conjuncta, made of seven pieces of cane or thick straw, of unequal lengths, applied to the lips, each blown into, according to the note intended to be expressed. This instrument is often met with in the ancient bucolic or pastoral writers.

PSALM 150: 5 Praise him with loud cymbals! Praise him with resounding cymbals!

Verse 5

Loud cymbals - צלצלים tseltselim. Two hollow plates of brass, which, being struck together, produced a sharp clanging sound. This instrument is still in use. What the high-sounding cymbals meant I know not; unless those of a larger make, struck above the head, and consequently emitting a louder sound.

PSALM 150: 6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

Verse 6

Let every thing that hath breath - Either to make a vocal noise, or a sound by blowing into pipes, fifes, flutes, trumpets, etc. Let all join together, and put forth all your strength and all your skill in sounding the praises of Jehovah; and then let a universal burst with Hallelujah! close the grand

ceremony. It is evident that this Psalm has no other meaning than merely the summoning up all the voices, and all the instruments, to complete the service in Full Chorus.

Of such peculiar importance did the Book of Psalms appear to our blessed Lord and his apostles, that they have quoted nearly fifty of them several times in the New Testament. There is scarcely a state in human life that is not distinctly marked in them; together with all the variety of experience which is found, not merely among pious Jews, but among Christians, the most deeply acquainted with the things of Christ.

The minister of God's word, who wishes to preach experimentally, should have frequent recourse to this sacred book; and by considering the various parts that refer to Jesus Christ and the Christian Church, he will be able to build up the people of God on their most holy faith; himself will grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God; and he will ever have an abundance of the most profitable matter for the edification of the Church of Christ.