

The Strength of Praise

“Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger.” (Psalm 8:2)

Introduction

1. In Matthew 21:12-16, after Jesus’ triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, He cleansed the temple and began healing people.
2. While this was happening, children were boisterously crying out, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”
3. In response to their complaint, Jesus quoted Psalm 8:2. From this quote, we learn an important truth about our praises to God.

Discussion

I. Psalm 8:2 and Matthew 21:16

- A. During His final week, Jesus was found in the Temple in Jerusalem teaching and performing miracles.
 1. Matt. 21:15: The children were proclaiming, “Hosana to the Son of David,” meaning, “Oh save!”
 2. Matthew 21:16: The Jewish leaders objected.
 3. Jesus responded, “Yes. Have you never read, ‘*Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise*’?”
- B. Jesus quotes Psalm 8:2.
 1. “*Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength...*”
 2. Observing the differences.
 3. The Hebrew literally reads “strength,” but Jesus translates it with the Greek word for praise.
 4. Why? What is the correlation between these two words?

II. The Correlation between Strength and Praise

- A. Throughout the Psalms, praise toward God is closely associated with strength.
 1. Psalm 21:13: “Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power.”
 2. Psalm 27:1: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid.”
 3. Psalm 28:7: “*The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him.*”
 4. This last verse helps explain the correlation between strength and praise. Can you see what it is? _____

- B. God is our strength; therefore, we praise Him.
 - 1. Praises given to God acknowledges that He is our strength and that we are not strong of ourselves.
 - a. Psalm 149:4: True, genuine praise flows a spirit of humility and meekness. It acknowledges, both all that God does for him/her, and the fact that one is total dependent on Him.
 - b. Praise also exalts God and declares His greatness and holiness, acknowledging the span that exists between His nature and ours (Isaiah 55:9), and His condescension in being mindful of mankind (Psalm 8:4).
 - c. Psalm 33:18-22: Praise is given by those whose trust is in the Lord alone.
 - 2. Those who praise God do so because they know that He alone is their strength; He is their salvation.
 - a. Ex. 15:2: The Lord is my strength... He has become my salvation.
 - b. 2 Sam. 22:33: "The God of my strength, I whom I will trust..."
 - c. Psalm 18:1-2: "...I will love You, O Lord, my strength. The LORD is **my** rock and **my** fortress and **my** deliverer; **My** God, **my strength**, in whom I will trust; **My** shield and the horn of **my** salvation, **my** stronghold."
 - 3. Matt. 15:8: Praise offered from a heart not humbled nor drawn near to God is vain. *"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."*
- C. How do we know our praise is genuine and from a heart truly drawn near to God?
 - 1. Job 1:20-21: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."
 - 2. Job 2:9-10: "Then his wife said to him, 'Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!' But he said to her, 'You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?' In all this Job did not sin with his lips."
 - 3. Genuine praise finds a reason for praise, even then it appears all that we hold dear has been lost? Why?
 - 4. Because it flows from a heart whose greatest delight is the Lord and not this life.
 - 5. Hab. 3:17-19: "Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls— Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills."

III. Preparing Strength in Praise.

- A. As we consider God's grace to us for sound speech, praises to God must become an essential element of speech, regularly offered by us.
- B. Hebrews 13:15: These are our sacrifices in Christ, the fruit of our lips.
 - 1. Eph. 1:14: Therefore, our salvation is a praise to God.
 - 2. 1 Pet. 1:7: As is our way of life, when we trust Him for salvation.
 - 3. 2 Cor. 12:7-10: Genuine and sincere praise must come from a humble heart willing to acknowledge and rejoice in its total dependance on God.

Conclusion

- 1. Consider, is your life filled with praise to God?
- 2. Do you recognize the extent to which He is your strength and power?
- 3. Do you regularly offer up to Him the sacrifices of praise, the fruit of your lips?