

Overcoming Stress: Praise

02 - Overcoming Stress: The Biblical Way
Sun, 22 SEP 2013 | Church on the Park

Text: Job 1:20-21

Theme: Praise has power to set you free from the pressures of this world.

Intro: Last week we saw how prayer helps us exchange our **stress** for God's **shalom** (peace). We learned that we shouldn't **cave** in to pressure, but **call** on God for strength. This week we'll discover that through **praise** and **worship** we can get through anything that life throws at us.

But before that I want to quickly jump back to last week and the subject of prayer. What's the **doorway** into effective prayer? It's found in Luke 18:9-14. The sinner's prayer opens the door to all other praying. If you don't have this foundation you can never build a strong prayer and praise life.

3 Facts About Stress: 1) Everyone experiences stress and sometimes it's overwhelming, 2) If stress is not handled correctly it will damage you and may even kill you, and 3) Stress can strengthen you if you handle it God's way.

This week we're going to see the power of praise, song and worship to overcome stress.

1) Job went through unimaginable stress; almost more than anyone in Scripture besides Jesus. How did he make it through? He persevered in praising God.

- James 5:11
- Job's stress - Job 1
- "At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he **fell** to the ground in **worship** and said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be **praised**.' In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing." (Job 1:20-22)
 - Worship - to bow down
 - Praise - To esteem highly, to kneel, to bless
 - The opposite of praise is curse. It means to esteem lightly or speak evil or negatively, to pull down.
- "Though he slay me, yet will I **hope/trust** in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face. Indeed, this will turn out for **my deliverance**, for no godless man would dare come before him!" (Job 13:15-16)
 - **Psalm 42:5**
- When your under pressure persevere in praising God. Don't let Satan deceive you in thinking God's not good.

- The devil wants to steal praise from God—that’s his objective.

2) Medical research has made a strong connection between singing and stress relief.

- “Doctors report that singing reduced the blood pressure of a 76-year-old woman who had experienced severe preoperative hypertension prior to total knee replacement surgery for osteoarthritis (OA). While the patient was unresponsive to aggressive pharmacologic interventions, the woman's blood pressure dropped dramatically when she sang several religious songs. This case-report appears in the April issue of *Arthritis Care & Research*, a journal published by Wiley-Blackwell on behalf of the American College of Rheumatology (ACR).”
 - What caused the reduction? **Singing praise for 20 minutes.**
 - <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/220738.php>
- “In a study reported at the 2008 meeting of the American Society of Hypertension, researchers at the University of Florence in Italy discovered that patients with high blood pressure who listened to music for **30 minutes a day**...experienced a decrease in blood pressure.”
 - <http://www.sheknows.com/entertainment/articles/972077/music-that-scientifically-lowers-blood-pressure>
- “Researchers in Sweden monitored the heart rates of singers as they performed a variety of choral works. They found that as the members sang in unison, their **pulses** began to speed up and slow down **at the same rate.**”
 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-23230411>

3) Praise has power to set you and others free.

- Let’s look at a Biblical example of the power of praise: **Acts 16**
- In the midnight hour when all looks dark, sing and praise the Lord.
- Our praise is only worthy of our Lord if it’s not **swayed** by pressure.
- **Daniel 3:1-30**
 - The connection between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “But If Not” message
- **Heaven** is full of praise and when we praise God it makes our place on earth like heaven.
- It **attracts** the angels and God’s presence. It **welcomes** God’s Kingdom on earth.

4) Psalms repeatedly commands us to praise God

- Psalm 145; 149
 - “*Let* the high praises of God *be* in their mouth, And a two-edged sword in their hand”
- **Common excuses** when it comes to expressing praising God
 - “I’m not an extroverted person”
 - “I’m praising God in my heart”
 - If it’s not coming out of your lips, it’s not really in your heart (Rom. 10)
 - “What will others think of me”
 - Muslims have no problem bowing before God and they are not even saved
 - “Doesn’t God want us to praise him however we like?”

5) When you praise God you magnify God more than your problem.

- Issues and stresses become **smaller and smaller** when your mind and heart focuses on the **majesty**, greatness and power of God.
- What seemed like a **mountain**, after worship, becomes a speck of **dust**. You see that God is your mountain, not the problem.
- Praise puts things into their right **perspective**.
- Praise is also a weapon that **pierces** the darkness, scaring it away. It's like turning on a **light** in a dark place.

Conclusion: Persevering praise will get you through whatever is thrown at you. Praise gives us peace, releases God's power and provides the right perspective for our problems.

END NOTES

shachah /shaw·khaw/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 2360; GK 8817; 172] ^x
occurrences; AV translates as “worship” 99 times, “bow” 31 times, “bow down” 18 times, “obedience” nine times, “reverence” five times, “fall down” three times, “themselves” twice, “stoop” once, “crouch” once, and translated miscellaneous three times. 1 to bow down. 1a (Qal) to bow down. 1b (Hiphil) to depress (fig). 1c (Hithpael). 1c1 to bow down, prostrate oneself. 1c1a before superior in homage. 1c1b before God in worship. 1c1c before false gods. 1c1d before angel.¹

.šāḥâ) bow down) ^x

Derivatives

2360a שָׁחַתְּ (šəḥûṭ) **pit** (Prov 28:10).

2360b שָׁחַתְּ (šəḥîṭ) **pit** (Lam 4:20; Ps 107:20).

Possibly cognate with Akkadian *shihpu*^ “to wallow,” “to descend.” Used once in the Qal stem of the Jews’ tormentors who had commanded, “bow down” or “lie down” (neb) that they might walk over their backs (Isa 51:23).

It occurs once in the Hiphil stem at Prov 12:25 of the heaviness in a man’s heart which “maketh it stoop” (KJV); “depresses it” (nab); “weighs him down” (RSV).

The commonly occurring form *hištaḥāwâ* a “to prostrate oneself” or “to worship,” which was analyzed as a Hithpael of *šāḥâ*, is now regarded on the basis of Ugaritic evidence as an Eshtaphal stem (the only example) of *ḥāwâ* II (q.v.).²

¹ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

² Yamauchi, E. (1999). 2360 שָׁחַתְּ. In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (914–915). Chicago: Moody Press.

barak /baw-rak/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 285; GK 1384 and 1385; 330] $\ddot{E}\ddot{E}_v$, $\ddot{E}\ddot{E}_v$ occurrences; AV translates as “bless” 302 times, “salute” five times, “curse” four times, “blaspheme” twice, “blessing” twice, “praised” twice, “kneel down” twice, “congratulate” once, “kneel” once, “make to kneel” once, and translated miscellaneous eight times. 1 to bless, kneel. 1a (Qal). 1a1 to kneel. 1a2 to bless. 1b (Niphal) to be blessed, bless oneself. 1c (Piel) to bless. 1d (Pual) to be blessed, be adored. 1e (Hiphil) to cause to kneel. 1f (Hithpael) to bless oneself. 2 (TWOT) to praise, salute, curse.³

bārak) to kneel, bless, praise, salute, curse (used euphemistically). (ASV and) $\text{?}\ddot{E}_v$ (.RSV similar

Derivatives

285a בָּרַךְ (*berek*) **knee**.

285b בְּרָכָה (*bērākā*) **blessing**.

285c בְּרֵכָה (*bērēkā*) **pool, pond**.

This root and its derivatives occur 415 times. The majority are in the Piel stem (214) which is translated “to bless.” The Qal passive participle “blessed” occurs sixty-one times. The meaning “to kneel” appears only three times, twice in the Qal (II Chr 6:13; Ps 95:6) and once in Hiphil (Gen 24:11). On this basis some argue that *bārak* “to kneel” is a denominative verb from *berek* “knee” and is unrelated to *bārak*; “to bless.” However, there may have been a felt association between kneeling and the receiving of a blessing (cf. II Chr 6:13, also Arabic *baraka*, which shows the same range of meaning). To bless in the OT means “to endue with power for success, prosperity, fecundity, longevity, etc.” **It is frequently contrasted with *qālal* “to esteem lightly, curse”** (cf. Deut 30:1, 19).⁴

yachal /yaw·chal/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 859; GK 3498; 42 occurrences; AV] $\text{}$ translates as “hope” 22 times, “wait” 12 times, “tarry” three times, “trust” twice, “variant” twice, and “stayed” once. 1 to wait, hope, expect. 1a (Niphal) to wait. 1b (Piel). 1b1 to wait, await, tarry. 1b2 to wait for, hope for. 1c (Hiphil) to wait, tarry, wait for, hope for.⁵

.yāḥal) wait, hope) $\text{}$ \ddot{E}

Derivatives

859a יָחַל (*yāḥîl*) **waiting**, used only in Lam 3:26.

859b תּוֹחֵלֶת (*tôḥelet*) **hope**.

³ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

⁴ Oswalt, J. N. (1999). 285 בָּרַךְ . In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (132). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁵ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

yāḥal occurs eighteen times in the Piel, fifteen times in the Hiphil and three in the Niphal with the idea of “tarrying” and “confident expectation, trust.” The LXX translates it nineteen times with *elpizō* and *epelpizō* “to hope.” ASV and RSV translate similarly. In the three instances where *yāḥal* is used in Niphal it has the simple concept of waiting for a short period of time, e.g. Noah “waited yet another seven days” before sending the dove (Gen 8:12). Cf. Ezk 19:5. This notion also is expressed in the Piel (Job 14:14) and the Hiphil (I Sam 13:8). However, *yāḥal* is used of “expectation, hope” which for the believer is closely linked with “faith, trust” and results in “patient waiting.” The sense of expectation may be positive, i.e. hoping for good in the future. Ezekiel 13:6 is a case in point, where people rely on the declarations of the false prophets “yet they hope for the fulfillment of their word.” Cf. Ps 71:14, “But as for me, I will hope continually.” Since *yāḥal* is primarily translated by *elpizō* in the LXX with the good in view, the opposite notion (Heb *zēwā’ā* “fear” or “dread” in Isa 28:19) is translated *elpis ponēra*, lit. “hope of evil.” This *yāḥal* “hope” is not a pacifying wish of the imagination which drowns out troubles, nor is it uncertain (as in the Greek concept), but rather *yāḥal* “hope” is the solid ground of expectation for the righteous. As such it is directed towards God. The Psalmist twice commands: “O Israel, hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is lovingkindness (Heb *ḥesed*), and with him is abundant redemption” (Ps 130:7; cf. 131:3).

In times of despair, the Psalmist encourages himself by saying, “Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, the help of his presence” (Ps 42:5 [H 6]; also 42:11 [H 12]; 43:5).

However, no greater testimony to such confident expectation is given than when Job cries out, “Though he slay me, I will hope in him. Nevertheless, I will argue my ways before him” (Job 13:15). However ASV and RSV render the verse, “Behold, he will slay me; I have no hope” following MT *Kethib* reading instead of the *Qere* which is supported by the LXX and other versions, in which case, Job’s impatience demonstrates his refusal to “patiently wait” for the Lord (cf. Job 6:11). Nevertheless, *yāḥal*, “hope” is a close synonym to *bāṭaḥ* “trust” and *qāwā* “wait for, hope for,” as in Mic 7:7, “But as for me, I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me.” The last phrase clearly demonstrates the confidence of the righteous in God’s future action at a time when sin is being judged. But further, the verse reflects not only the ground of faith, the Lord himself, but the saving activity of his God. In short, that which is hoped for is not some desideratum arising from one’s imagination, but in God himself and whatever he should propose to accomplish. One is reminded of the Christian’s confidence as expressed in Rom 8:28–29. Hence the godly may confidently rest on God’s word, e.g. “Those who fear thee shall see me rejoice, because I have hoped in thy word” (Ps 119:74, NASB weakens this “because I wait for thy word”). Cf. also 119:43, 81, 114, 147; 130:5. He may also be confident about God’s faithful covenant love, e.g. “Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope for his loving kindness (*ḥesed*, Ps 33:18). Cf. also Lam 3:21, 24.

Not only does “hope” bring relief from present problems, but also in the eschatological sense “hope” in God’s help and ultimate salvation will bring to an end all distress. One needs to look at Isa 51:5 where God promises his omnipotent

help, “My righteousness is near, my salvation has gone forth, and my arms will judge the people; the coastland will wait for me, and for my arm they will wait expectantly.” Cf. also Jer 29:11; 31:17; Mic 7:7.⁶

Calls to praise

Praise opening up the prison in Acts

My early salvation I was constantly singing. I made everything into a song.

Psa 149 - Praise in the mouth & a two edged sword in your hand.

The deception of praising in your heart alone. The praise and song need to come out of your lips.

Will B. sang even though his voice was out of tune.

Singing and praise release the power of God into your situation.

The example of Anna’s parents worshipping through the death of their son.

God has given you a mighty weapon to overcome stress: it’s called praise.

Lift your hands. Not just in your heart.

Dance in praise, not just in your heart.

Not bowing to the gods of evil and pleasure. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (spelling?)

Psalm 42

From lamentation to praise. From darkness to light.

The power of corporate singing

⁶ Gilchrist, P. R. (1999). 859 לַחַיִּים. In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, Jr. & B. K. Waltke, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (373–374). Chicago: Moody Press.