



hymn 72 (praise to the lord, the almighty)— Meditation

1. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
Join the great throng,
Psaltery, organ and song,
Sounding in glad adoration!
2. Praise to the Lord! Over all things he gloriously reigneth.
Borne as on eagle wings, safely his Saints he sustaineth.
Hast thou not seen
How all thou needest hath been
Granted in what he ordaineth?
3. Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy way and defend thee.
Surely his goodness and mercy shall ever attend thee.
Ponder anew
What the Almighty can do,
Who with his love doth befriend thee.
4. Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath breath, join with Abraham's seed to adore him!
Let the "amen"
Sum all our praises again,
Now as we worship before him.

The hymnist, and we with him, prays, "Oh, let all that is in me adore him!" Praise forms in our thoughts, our minds, our hearts, and our souls. Praise is expressed in the words that our tongues utter and the actions that our hands and bodies perform. Praise should indeed occupy every part of us.

"I will praise, O Lord, with my whole heart,"¹ the Psalmist promised. He would praise God "at all times,"² from the cradle to when he became "old and grayheaded,"³ and then as long as "I have my being."⁴ Still not enough, he would praise "yet more and more,"⁵ "I will praise thee for ever."⁶ His praise

¹ Psalm 9.¹

² Psalm 34.¹

³ Psalm 71.¹⁸

⁴ Psalm 104.³³

⁵ Psalm 71.¹⁴

⁶ Psalm 52.⁹

would be loud—as loud and trumpets and cymbals⁷—and “boastful.”⁸ His praise would flow from “joyful lips,”⁹ becoming “a joyful noise unto God.”¹⁰ He would not be timid, certainly not be silenced,¹¹ and never hide or conceal God’s praiseworthiness.¹²

His praise would flow, not only at all times, but in all places and “among much people.”¹³ He would “shew forth all thy praise” from the intimacy of “the great congregation”¹⁴ to the open friendliness of “the gates of the daughter of Zion”¹⁵ to less familiar, less friendly, possibly hostile locales found “among the nations”¹⁶ and “among the heathen.”¹⁷ He would not even confine his praise to the present generation, near or far, but proclaim it to a future people, “shewing to the generations to come the praises of the LORD.”¹⁸ He would invite all, near and far, present or future to join him: “Let us exalt his name together.”¹⁹

It was his hope that such praise, always “comely”²⁰ in the eyes of God, would become so common and so pervasive that it could be said of God: Thou “inhabitest the praises of Israel.”²¹ Indeed, “every thing that hath breath”²² would join the choir in praise of God. We could do worse than follow the Psalmist’s example. We could not do better than measure ourselves against his standard and then pattern our praise after him.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

(edition: October 25, 2024)

⁷ Psalm 150.³⁻⁵

⁸ Psalm 34.²

⁹ Psalm 63.⁵

¹⁰ Psalm 95.²

¹¹ Psalm 30.¹²

¹² Psalm 40.¹⁰

¹³ Psalm 35.¹⁸

¹⁴ Psalm 22.²⁵

¹⁵ Psalm 9.¹⁴

¹⁶ Psalm 57.⁹

¹⁷ Psalm 18.⁴⁹

¹⁸ Psalm 78.⁴

¹⁹ Psalm 34.³

²⁰ Psalm 147.¹

²¹ Psalm 22.³

²² Psalm 150.⁶