

# (Basics) 29. Praise Brings Deliverance

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon teaches that praise in the midst of trials opens the way for God's deliverance and is a powerful expression of faith.*

**Duration:** 13:03

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 20:22, Psalm 50:6-7, Psalm 50:15, Psalm 50:23, Matthew 6:33, James 1:5

**Topics:** "Praise And Worship", "Faith And Trust"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of praising God in difficult situations. He shares the story of King Jehoshaphat and how he led the people of Israel to victory by praising God instead of relying on their own strength. The speaker highlights seven key points that Jehoshaphat acknowledged in his prayer to God: God's sovereignty, past victories, God's promises, the fact that they are God's inheritance, their weakness, their lack of wisdom, and their trust in God. The speaker encourages listeners to apply these principles in their own lives and to rely on God's power and promises when facing challenges.

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## Transcript

And we want to continue to look at the tremendous power that can come into our lives if we learn how to praise God in all situations. God allows Satan to harass and trouble his children in many ways. Why do you think God allows that? God is wise and he can destroy Satan in a moment, if he likes, but he doesn't do it because he accomplishes something good through it.

That's why he's permitted Satan to continue to exist. Fire, for example, is dangerous, but fire can purify gold. In the same way, God can use the trials and the persecutions and the oppression that Satan can bring upon his children to purify them, just like gold is purified.

But we have to react in a proper way, in a good way, to those trials and temptations. And the right way to react, if we have faith, is with a spirit of praise. Lord, I will not complain here.

I'm suffering, perhaps. I'm going through a difficult time. But I will not lose my faith.

God is on the throne. The devil's been defeated on the cross. My sins are forgiven.

My past is blotted out. I'm on my way to heaven. Jesus is my Lord, my heavenly bridegroom.

And God is making everything work together for my good. And when we remain in a spirit of thanksgiving and praise like that in every situation, do you know what happens? I want to show you a wonderful verse in Psalm 50. In Psalm 50, the last verse, Psalm 50, verse 23, we read this.

The one who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors me, says the Lord, and makes a way for me to show him my deliverance. That is the literal translation of that verse, that anyone who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors God. And in doing that, he makes a way for God to show him God's deliverance or salvation.

Now what does that mean? That means that if you're in a tight spot right now and you want God to deliver you from it, you have to make a way for God to show you that deliverance, for God to bring that deliverance. God will do the deliverance, but God cannot do that until you open a way for him. And the way we open the way is by praising the Lord, that's what it says here.

The one who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving makes a way for God to bring a deliverance in that situation. This means that there are many situations out of which we could have been delivered if we had praised God instead of complaining against people and against the devil. Because praise is the mark of faith.

They believed his words, they sang his praise. If you don't praise God, God can do nothing for you, because you don't believe him. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

But with faith, we read in Hebrews, you can shut the mouths of lions, you can put enemies to flight, you can open prison doors. With faith, people even got their dead children back to life. Yeah, faith is a tremendous power and faith is manifested in praise.

Now, praying alone cannot deliver us out of some situations. It's good to pray when you're in a tight spot. But in addition to prayer, we must learn how to praise.

In other words, we must keep on praying until we reach the point where we don't have to pray anymore. We have an assurance in our heart that the Holy Spirit gives us a witness in our heart that God has heard our prayer. And then, what do you do after that? Supposing you are asking for something and after some time you hear a witness in your spirit that it's being granted.

What do you do? Then you praise God. You thank Him. Faith is then born and we believe that we have received.

Like Jesus said, when you pray, believe that you have received. You can't do that right at the beginning. But as you continue to pray, you can come to a point where you believe that you have received.

Even though the answer has not yet come. You can't see the answer yet, but you praise God. And then, we will receive what we pray for.

And when that point comes, we stop praying and start praising God. That is the evidence of faith. And then, through that praise, we make a way for God to show us His deliverance.

Now, there is a wonderful example of this in the Old Testament in 2 Chronicles 20. It's unfortunate that some believers don't read the Old Testament so much. Particularly the books of Chronicles.

They are not so familiar with it. But here is a beautiful story in 2 Chronicles 20 where we read of a great multitude of enemies that surrounded King Jehoshaphat. And when King Jehoshaphat was surrounded by such a great multitude of enemies, it was the absolutely proper thing to do.

He called the whole nation of Judah to seek God in fasting and prayer. And they prayed to God and they acknowledged three things. You know what they said to God? They said in 2 Chronicles 20, verse 12, they acknowledged their helplessness, they acknowledged their foolishness, and then they acknowledged their faith.

Now, these are the three things we need to acknowledge. It's easy to acknowledge our helplessness and our foolishness. To say, well, Lord, we've got no strength against this situation.

We don't know what to do. That we can say in all situations. But nothing happens if you stop there.

You've got to go on and say, Lord, but we believe that you will answer us. Now, notice the prayer that Jehoshaphat prayed here in 2 Chronicles 20, verse 6 to 12. First of all, he praised God for his sovereignty in verse 6. He said, Lord, you are the ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations.

And then secondly, you see, this is a pattern for us to, for our prayer. Something we can learn from Jehoshaphat. Notice seven things.

First of all, he praised God for his sovereignty. He said, Lord, you're ruler of all the kingdoms of the nations, power and might on your hand. No one can stand against you.

You know, when we pray to God, it's good to remind ourselves, first of all, of the sovereignty of God. Jesus said, when you pray, pray saying, our Father, and then what? Who art in heaven. That means the one who is sovereign ruler from heaven.

Then the second thing that Jehoshaphat reminded God and reminded himself of was what God had done in past days. Verse 7. He said, Lord, aren't you the one who drove out the Canaanites from this land and you gave it to the descendants of Abraham forever? See, if we remind ourselves of what God has done for us in the past, that really stirs up faith, you know. Sometimes you're facing a very difficult situation and you feel there's no way out.

Why don't you look back over your life and think of the many, many, many times in your life where you felt there was no way out and God made a way out? That stirs up faith in your heart. And then the third thing we read is that Jehoshaphat reminded God of his promise in his word. He said, didn't you say, Lord, that if evil comes upon us with a sword and we stand before you in this house, verse 9, and cry to you, you'll deliver us? And that's another good thing to have when we are in a tight situation.

Some promise from the word of God. It could be a simple promise like the one we have in Psalm 50 which says, call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you. Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you.

Say, Lord, you promised that. Do it now. It's good to know the promises of scripture.

It's good to memorize the promises of God in scripture so that you can quote them in prayer. It strengthens faith. It's fuel for faith.

You know, it's like putting fuel in the fire. Then the fire burns brighter. You don't have any promises, then the fire of faith burns very low.

And then fourthly, in verse 11, we read that he reminded God saying, we are your inheritance. We're not just like all the other people in the world. We are your inheritance.

You purchased us and that's the fourth thing we can tell God too. Lord, you purchased us on Calvary. The blood of Jesus has purchased me.

I am God's inheritance. You are God's inheritance purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. Then fifthly, he told God what we saw earlier.

Lord, we are powerless. We are weak. That's another thing.

That we need to acknowledge. Sometimes we think we're very strong. But we're actually weak.

And it's good for us to acknowledge it. Say, Lord, I'm weak. I can't handle this situation.

It's too much for me. And then sixthly, in the same verse 12, he said, Lord, not only am I weak, I don't have any wisdom as to what to do in this situation. See, that's also good for us to acknowledge.

Instead of thinking we are clever and capable, to say, Lord, I don't have any wisdom. The Bible says in James 1, does anyone lack wisdom among you, James 1.5? Let him ask God. God will give liberally.

But you've got to acknowledge. You've got to be humble and say, Lord, I don't know how to handle this situation. That was the sixth thing.

And the seventh, and you must finish here. He said, but our eyes are on you. We're trusting you.

You see that? Let me go through those seven things. First of all, he praised God for his sovereignty. Verse 6. Second, he reminded himself of what God had done in past days.

Verse 7. Third, he reminded God of his promise. Verse 9. Fourth, he reminded God that we are your inheritance. Verse 11.

And then in verse 12, he reminded God of three things. First, we've got no power to handle this. We have no wisdom.

But we are relying on you. We're trusting you completely. And we read in the rest of that chapter.

Take time to read it. The enemies were thoroughly defeated. They went out praising God.

They didn't take any weapons. No bows and arrows. They just went out praising the Lord.

Jehoshaphat believed God. And he sent a choir of people praising God. And we read in verse 22.

As they began singing and praising the Lord. Exactly like it says in Psalm 50 verse 23. The Lord opened a door for them to be delivered.

And the enemies were defeated. Not only the enemies were defeated. We read later on in that chapter.

That Israel became rich with the wealth of their enemies. This is the secret. Whatever situation you're in.

Learn to praise God. On the foundation of these seven things I just mentioned. And you'll find God opens a door for you to be set free.

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