

# PSALMS OF HOPE

@BromleyBaptistChurch



## Bromley Baptist Church's 2021 Lent Programme

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March  
Lent 5

# Sermon+

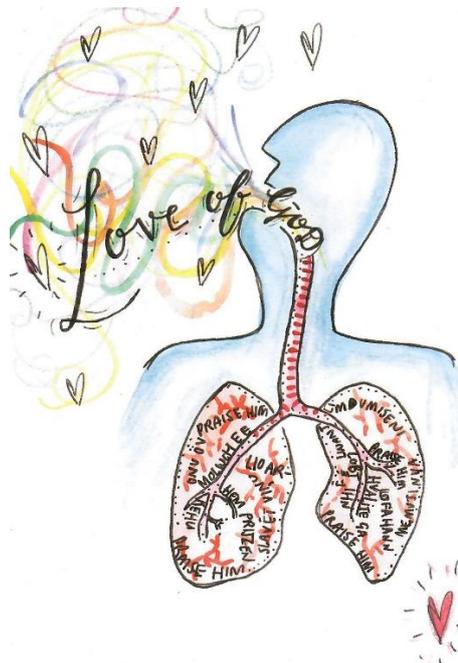
## PSALM 150

### PRAISE THE LORD!



Pray:

We come before the God who inhabits our world and indwells our lives. We need not look up to find God, we need only to look around: within ourselves, beyond ourselves, into the eyes of another. We need not listen for a distant thunder to find God, we need only listen to the music of life, the words of children, the questions of the curious, the rhythm of a heartbeat, the revelations found in his word. Be with us now as we explore this psalm some more. **Amen.**



Love of God 150 13/10/15

## Introduction:

One of the most difficult things about the last year has been the inability to sing together. Different people find that they experience God in different ways. For me it's singing. The words, the music, the being with other people, are all part of how I worship.

A long time ago we had a choir in the church. At first it was called Young Revelation, although after a while we got older and so we dropped the Young! We sang all kinds of things, many of which were written by Nick Russell-Smith's father, who led the choir. One of the most uplifting and fun to sing began with the line 'What joy there is in living, I've found the light of heaven, my sins are all forgiven by giving my life to him.' It had a great piano accompaniment, a rousing hallelujah, and always went down well with audiences.

I think that if Psalm 150 had included singing, that was exactly the kind of song they might have sung.



### Read:

#### Psalm 150 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD.

Praise God in his sanctuary;  
praise him in his mighty heavens.

<sup>2</sup> Praise him for his acts of power;  
praise him for his surpassing greatness.

<sup>3</sup> Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,  
praise him with the harp and lyre,

<sup>4</sup> praise him with tambourine and dancing,  
praise him with the strings and pipe,

<sup>5</sup> praise him with the clash of cymbals,  
praise him with resounding cymbals.

<sup>6</sup> Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD

## A consideration of the psalm:

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, saw hymn-singing as an important way to teach people their faith and to inspire their worship. That's still true today and it's why what we sing matters.

In Wesley's day much of the preaching happened outside to a congregation most of whom would not have had access to a Bible, some of whom may not have even been able to read. If he wanted them to learn and remember and understand the truths of what he was teaching, what better way than to put it into a hymn. Most of them were written by his brother Charles, an even more prolific hymn writer than Graham Kendrick! They were taught in the way we teach children songs now, one line at a time.

If you've grown up in church, you'll be familiar with hymns like 'And can it be'. The words seem a bit archaic now. 'Thine eye diffused a quickening ray' is not a sentence many people would grasp very easily. But there is much that still stirs us as we sing.

'Amazing love how can it be, that thou my God shouldst die for me?'

'Bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own.'

These are lines written to teach the truths of the gospel, and to inspire both 18<sup>th</sup> century Christians and us to praise God.

There is actually no singing in Psalm 150 – it's all instruments. However, when we look at other parts of the Bible which describe heaven, there is a lot more than just instruments. Revelation 4 gives a glorious description. It begins with a voice which sounds like a trumpet. The voice leads

John the Apostle into the presence of someone seated on a throne. In the next four verses there are images of jasper and ruby, rainbow-like emeralds, crowns of gold, flashes of lightning, blazing lamps and a sea like crystal. That's before we get to the four living creatures, who never stop saying 'Holy, holy, holy' and the 24 elders who fall down before the throne in worship. It's a complete sensory overload and totally glorious!

We do need to be careful about what we sing, to make sure we focus on God and not just on ourselves. We do need to remember that worship is far more than just what we sing, it's about how we live.

We do need too to take account of lament as well as praise, but it is OK to take part in and enjoy praising God together. Whether we can sing or not, whether we can play or not, there is room for everyone.



### Questions

1. Which aspects of God's character can be seen as 'holy' and which as 'helpful'? How does it help us to focus on the holiness of God?
2. What ideas do you have about how we can offer God praise when we are unable to meet physically?
3. Which songs or hymns help you to praise God and why?



### Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for music, for art, for all that is beautiful in our lives. Thank you that you welcome these things as part of our praise. In fact, they are part of the image we have of worship in heaven. We pray that you will help us as we are unable to praise you together. Help us to be creative, to use all the talents and abilities you have given us as we respond to your love.

When our lives are difficult and we find it hard to praise you, please help us to focus on your holiness and to keep our eyes fixed on you.

**Amen.**

Glenis Ruston