

Date: 20 March 2022
Message: Praise – Your Weapon For Victory
Congregation: Online

Introduction

Isaiah 61:1-3

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God. To comfort all who mourn. To console those who mourn in Zion. To give them beauty for ashes. The oil of joy for mourning. The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

NLT

...festive praise instead of despair. In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the LORD has planted for his own glory.

RSV

... the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit;

Amplified

The garment [expressive] of praise instead of a disheartened spirit.

Message

...a praising heart instead of a languid spirit.

The Bible refers to praise as a garment.

In other words, it is more than a piece of clothing usually thrown over our shoulders but rather one that is used ‘to wrap’ or ‘cover’ ourselves. This garment of praise is to leave no openings through which hostile elements can penetrate. This garment of praise repels and replaces the heavy spirit.

What is a heavy spirit?

- feeling that weighs you down
- discouragement

- disheartened
- despair – loss of hope - hopelessness
- a failing spirit, the same word as “dimly burning”.
- the spirit one feels when under affliction
- or under a sense of sin, a load of guilt, and expectation of wrath
- spirit of fear/doubt
- spirit clothed in gloom like a black robe
- a faint and almost extinguished spir

The message of instruction here is to ‘put on’ this garment of praise so as to repel these negative feelings:

- Praise overcomes that feeling that weighs you down
- Praise resists discouragement.
- Praise nurses you when you are disheartened.
- Praise overpowers that sense of despair.
- Praise boosts a failing spirit.
- Praises heals the spirit that is under affliction.
- Praise releases that load of guilt when you repent.
- Praise erases the spirit of fear/doubt.
- Praise ignites a faint and almost extinguished spirit.
- Praise casts off oppressive works of darkness.
- Praises brings gladness in your heart.
- Praise breeds abundant life.

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE THE WEAPON OF PRAISE

1. Use Praise to fight fear – defeats the enemy.

2 Chronicles 20:1-3

¹ It happened after this that the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat. ²Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar” (which is En Gedi). ³And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴So Judah gathered together

to ask help from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

A nation gripped with fear. Facing war. Facing a combination of the strongest armies in the region and in those times. In the natural, there was no way Jehoshaphat and Judah would prevail, they were likely to be defeated:

1 Chronicles 20:12

O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.

1 Chronicles 20:15

And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.

There was a methodology to this battle, a strategy for victory:

1 Chronicles 20:21-23

²¹ And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever." ²² Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. ²³ For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

Ambushes were only set as the people began to sing and praise. When your praise is faith-filled it does something to God. It propels Him to act on your behalf.

There is something about praising God from a place of surrender, complete trust in Him and expectancy knowing that God will fight for you.

Question:

Are you praising God with everything within you in the face of your battles?

Never undermine the power of praise. It is a powerful weapon through which we can achieve victory.

2. Use Praise in the midst of desolation/destruction/despair

Jeremiah 33:10-11

¹⁰ “Thus says the Lord: ‘Again there shall be heard in this place—of which you say, “It is desolate, without man and without beast”—in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, ¹¹ the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say: “Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His mercy endures forever” and of those who will bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord. For I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first,’ says the Lord.

Desolation – speaks of barrenness, something laid waste, deprived or destitute of inhabitants. Jeremiah reassures God's people not be disheartened in the midst of barrenness, waste or destitution, for those very situations will be changed.

Question:

Are you experiencing desolation of any kind in your life? Are you going through spiritual or physical barrenness? What has been laid to waste in your life?

Don't hold back, bring a sacrifice of praise to Him. Let praise be your anchor in this season of seeming desolation and waste. Praise activates your faith. Praise creates hope. Praise shifts to becoming your prophetic weapon.

3. Use Praise in seasons of tears and brokenness/mourning

Psalm 126:5-6 NKJV

Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126:5-6 NIV

Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.

Psalm 126:5-6 NLT

Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy. They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest.

Here we discover that what we plant in the spiritual realm accompanied by a spirit of brokenness will not only bring a spiritual harvest of results but will leave the sower with a spirit of rejoicing in the process.

Question:

Are you going through a season where you are carrying burdens that are weighing you down?

Psalm 30:5(b) NKJV

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

Psalm 30:5(b) The Message

The nights of crying your eyes out give way to days of laughter.

Psalm 30:11 NKJV

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,

New Living Translation

You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing. You have taken away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy,

4. Use Praise when confronted with the oppressive works of darkness.

1 Samuel 16:14-23

¹⁴But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him. ¹⁵And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you. ¹⁶Let our master now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing spirit from God is upon you, and you shall be well." ¹⁷So Saul said to his servants, "Provide me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me." ¹⁸Then one of the servants answered and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD is with him." ¹⁹Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." ²⁰And Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat, and sent them by his son David to Saul. ²¹So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armorbearer. ²²Then Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight." ²³And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.

Worship repels evil spirits. This is why wherever and whenever the presence or Glory of God descends in a place evil spirits manifest. They cannot reside in the presence of God. Worship of God/ praise unto God invites His glory, majesty, His presence. His being. It establishes the authority of God in situations.

5. Use Praise when you are feeling discouraged

Psalm 43:5 NLT

Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again— my Savior and my God.

NKJV

Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God for I shall yet praise Him. The help of my countenance and my God.

NIV

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

6. Praising God for His track record of faithfulness

Psalm 22:3 NKJV

But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You. They trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

Psalm 89:1-2, 5-8

¹ I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever, with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations. ² For I have said, "Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens."

⁵ And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD. Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints. ⁶ For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD? ⁷ God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and to be held in reverence by all *those* around Him. ⁸ O LORD God of hosts, who *is* mighty like You, O LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.

Psalm 150:6

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Conclusion

Let us develop a culture lifestyle that glorifies the name of the Lord in all situations.