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## Exhortation

# "The God of my life"

## 9. The God of praise

Jim Wood

**T**HE BOOK of Psalms is the praise book of the Bible. In no other book is there reference to and emphasis on praise which is remotely similar. Here is expression of adoration, the ascribing of honour, the desire to exalt, the glorifying of the One Who provides, protects and promises.

Psalm 135 begins and ends, "Praise ye the LORD" (vv. 1,21), and the reasons for this outburst of praise are evidently set forth:

The Lord:	
exists	v. 3
is good	v. 3
has a purpose	v. 4
is great	v. 5
has no equal	v. 5
is the Creator	vv. 6,7
is powerful	v. 8
warns before He acts	v. 9
then acts decisively	vv. 10,11
fulfils His promises	v. 12
is unconfined by time	v. 13
deals justly with His people	v. 14
is compassionate to His servants	v. 14.

Psalm 106 similarly begins and ends, "Praise ye the LORD", and poses two questions designed to encourage. Firstly, there is a meditation on His greatness: "Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD?"; and, secondly, the realisation that man's offering of praise can never be adequate, nor complete: "who can shew forth all His praise?" (v. 2). The emphasis in this psalm, and the circumstance which justifies such outpouring of praise this time, is God's merciful response to the sinner: "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even at the Red sea. Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known" (vv. 6-8).

Again, drawing from the history of the people, the ready deliverance of the Lord is to the

fore: "Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry: and He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies" (vv. 43-45). In the knowledge of the character of God seen in these things, the psalmist acknowledges the blessings of God on the upright: "Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times" (v. 3); and he appeals: "Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit me with Thy salvation" (v. 4).

In the psalmist we have one who has become utterly convinced of the existence of God, one who continues to marvel at His creation, and who is deeply appreciative of His provision and protection. Man is not born with these thoughts. They have not been planted automatically in his mind. They develop as the mind is exposed daily to the fact of our existence, the marvellous complexity of the natural world, the preservation of His Word, the beauty of His purpose, the unerring fulfilment of His prophecies and the unselfish love in His giving of the only begotten Son. In this way our deficiencies and His provision, our dependance and His supply, our need and His help, our weakness and His strength, and our sin and His forgiveness, are fresh in our minds and to the forefront of our thoughts.

The consequence? "I will extol Thee, my God, O king; and I will bless Thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless Thee; and I will praise Thy name for ever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts: and I will declare Thy greatness" (Ps. 145:1-6). So the God of our lives will become the God of praise.