

**Association of 7th Day Pentecostal Assemblies
(Esreso)**

End-of-Year Camp Meeting

Message of Welcome

By

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Title: His Praise is Forever

Text: Ps. 34:1-10

Unstoppable Joy of the Redeemed Soul

The soul is bubbling over with joy and gratitude, and the mouth cannot help but give vent to the spiritual feelings of holy ecstasy welling from the depths of the soul.

The result is Psalm 34, which David sings with palpable enthusiasm:

*“I will bless the LORD at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.
O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together” (vv. 1-3).*

It’s an attitude towards praise that is irrevocable in its commitment to blessing Yahweh “at all times”. No circumstance or reason can stop the praise. The premise is that God is worthy of praise every point in time. There is, and can be, no time where He’s undeserving of praise.

God is naturally worthy of praise, but He is also worthy of praise because of His continuing faithfulness towards us. If we are to count off the benefits of His blessings in our lives, we could certainly come to the same conclusion King David reached: God is worthy of our praise at all times.

The next step is to incorporate it into our everyday living experience! Blessing Him at all times so our mouths never run dry of His praise! And it’s an expression of the indescribable but real feelings of the soul towards YHWH.

The soul is at home with God and takes its delight in Him. It has found refuge and salvation in God and cannot remain silent about its joy in God! It takes great pride in His works of salvation and grace, and it cannot keep it to itself – “the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.”

It’s an electrifying atmosphere of praise, for He has not just blessed one soul, but He has blessed several thousands, even countless souls.

As we are gathered here in His presence, we are a testimony to His steadfast faithfulness that has secured us throughout the year. We have been beneficiaries of His blessings in various shapes and forms, so that even when we are down we can be sure we are blessed by Him. And He’s blessing us even now.

How then could we ever cease to praise Him?

He’s a Saving God!

Praise is not a ritual we have invented for ourselves in honour of a mythical God. It’s not make-believe just to make ourselves feel good or satisfy our religious sentiments.

We praise the Living God in response to what He has actually done in our lives:

“I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears” (v. 4)

Yahweh is a living, listening, saving God. Prayer is not an empty spiritual exercise we do out of mere religiosity or to soothe our ruffled emotions. We seek the face of the Lord in prayer, and when He hears us we know it: He delivers us from our fears and our worries. He calms our souls and gives us hope.

His peace reigns in our inner souls:

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

His implantation of Shalom is true. Christ is “the anchor of the soul” keeping it firmly in place on the world’s seas of trouble (Heb. 6:18). It’s life in the glorious presence of God where “there’s fullness of joy” because our worries have been taken over by Him (Ps. 16:11; 1 Pet. 5:7).

And He actually has been in this business of saving people from the fears and anxieties of their souls from ancient times, bespeaking His eternity and unflagging saving power:

“They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed” (v. 5).

The “they” refers to the more ancient saints before King David who relied on Yahweh and were not put to shame before their contemporaries. What made the difference in their lives was their

decision to look to God steadfastly amid their fears and worries. And what they feared never came. They were dispelled from their minds, and as their hearts rejoiced in the salvation of God, the fears never materialized in their lives. “Their faces were not ashamed”. Instead, they glowed with His glory, the joy of His saving power!

And the assurance of their hearts, the exhilarating throbbing hope of salvation, was not just a feeling of joyful hope in God; it became a reality:

“The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him out of all his troubles” (v.6).

May His name be blessed! We will yet praise Him again! The saving power of God is not just an experience for a privileged few set in the past. It’s an ongoing reality to this present time for all those who fear Him:

“The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.

*“O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him”
(vv. 7-8).*

One only has to reverence the Holy One of Israel, YHWH, and the holy angels of heaven are on guard 24/7! Is it not a sweet experience to have heaven watch and care for you and envelope you in the Shekinah glory of the Most High?

It certainly is a sweet, wonderful experience, and we need to invite others to have a taste of the believer’s sweet life in God – His marvellous grace, His protective power, His healing touch, His victorious life of righteousness and His tender love.

“O taste and see that the LORD is good”! It obliges us to witness; to tell the story of the unparalleled love of Christ!

Don’t forget to disclose, however, that the sweetness of the Lord is in fearing Him. One wonderful result is life beyond fear of lack:

“O fear the LORD, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him.

“The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing” (vv. 9-10).

It’s not by our might or our power that we can assure ourselves of the necessities of life and of our souls. These are only guaranteed unfailingly by godly fear. Those who rely on their own strength and abilities –“the young lions” – are not so blessed. Their strength fails them and they suffer hunger and lack, “but they that seek Yahweh shall not want any good thing”!

Human strength is finite; it fails and can’t always grant us good things. But life in the Lord is not just an open sesame to ‘things’ of all sorts – the unholy, the fleshly, the ungodly, the beautiful and the ugly. Life in the Lord guarantees access to only the good things of God’s grace. For,

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (Jam. 1:17).

That indeed is the reason why His Praise is forever! He will never cease to do us good which means we will never cease to bless His name in return. He’s blessed forever. Amen!