

# Lesson 10 | August 7, 2022

## Praise Almighty God

**Study Text:** Psalms 50:1–23; 147:1–20

**Central Truth:** Sing praises to God for His matchless greatness.

**Key Verse: Psalm 147:1**

Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely (KJV).

Praise the Lord! How good to sing praises to our God! How delightful and how fitting! (NLT)

### Learning Objectives

- Students will avow and worship God for His justness and self-sufficiency.
- Students will acknowledge God's sovereignty in summoning us to give an account at any time.
- Students will purpose to develop a relationship with God of love and passion rather than ritual.

## Introducing the Lesson

**Say:** Every civilized culture has laws that citizens are expected to obey. God made His laws very clear when establishing the nation of Israel. As we study Psalm 50 today, we ask God to open our hearts and minds to hear what He has to say to us regarding our present state of worship. Are we pleasing the Lord?

### Opening Activity—The Summons

**Ask:** *Have you ever been summoned to court? Who has the ultimate say in courtrooms? What are some of the feelings generated inside those four walls?* Examples might include the judge or jury has the ultimate say and feelings might include anger, fear, frustration, relief, anxiety, etc.

**Say:** Even in an unjust worldly justice system the judge wields the power to pronounce the final verdict. (Consider displaying a gavel or a photo of one.) How much more true is this of God who is the ultimate judge? (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**Worship is a vital part of every believer's life and an integral part of the church. We do not have animal sacrifices today. Nevertheless, worship can take many forms such as singing, giving in the offering, serving, etc. How we worship and what our heart condition is are key. A regular examination in this area of our spiritual life is wise. How do we keep worship passionate instead of just something to check off our "to do" list?**

Psalm 50 is a musical story about God issuing a court summons to all people. He calls both heaven and earth as witnesses. No one is exempt from the summons to appear. In the song, God himself addresses all those claiming to be followers of Jehovah as well as those who reject Him.

## Part 1—Hear and Obey the Flawless Judge Summons To Appear

Psalm 50:1–6

[Psa 50:1-6 KJV] 1 [[A Psalm of Asaph.]] The mighty God, [even] the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. 2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. 3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. 4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. 5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. 6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God [is] judge himself. Selah.

**Say:** The embers of a fire go out unless tended. Knives and tools lose their edge and effectiveness without sharpening. In Psalm 50, **God once again reminds His people (and us) that sacrifices are not for Him.** Instead, they are reminders to us that salvation for us cost His life. In this courtroom scene God speaks of how to remain passionate in worship, which allows us to be “sharp” and effective for Him. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Psalm 50 is one of twelve songs credited to Asaph. The ancient use of a legal proceeding to denote the seriousness of a matter is used here. The call (summons) has been sent out and the stage is set. God is introduced into the courtroom with fire and tempests. He is coming to judge. His power and might are shown in His manner of arrival.

Those who claim to be in covenant agreement by sacrifice are called first. He informs them that the sacrifices are not because He needs to be fed, entertained, or pacified. The gods of the ancient world required those kinds of sacrifices but not the living God. We will discuss His declaration to this group in the next part of our lesson.

[Psa 50:8-12 KJV] 8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, [to have been] continually before me. 9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, [nor] he goats out of thy folds. 10 For every beast of the forest [is] mine, [and] the cattle upon a thousand hills. 11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the

wild beasts of the field [are] mine. 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world [is] mine, and the fulness thereof.

### ***Discuss***

? Why do people need judges?

? Based on this Scripture, compare and contrast God's "court" with the courts of the world.

## **The Wicked Rebuked**

Psalm 50:16–23

**[Psa 50:16-23 KJV] 16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or [that] thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? 17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. 18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. 19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. 20 Thou sittest [and] speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. 21 These [things] hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether [such an one] as thyself: [but] I will reprove thee, and set [them] in order before thine eyes. 22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear [you] in pieces, and [there be] none to deliver. 23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth [his] conversation [aright] will I shew the salvation of God.**

**Say:** In these verses, God is speaking to Israel, His chosen people. Yet He calls them "wicked." They are His covenant people. They know His laws and have experienced His miracles, but they still do not please Him. He describes their disobedience and calls for them to repent.

(Share your highlights from the following text.)

Now, we move on to another group addressed in the courtroom of Psalm 50—the wicked, or those who reject God's laws and covenant. These could actually be churchgoers and people who claim to be God-fearing. However, their lives in no way resemble God's love or His heart. Instead they are described as follows.

They:

- 1. quote Scripture, but do not live it (verse 16).**
- 2. hate God's instructions, refusing to listen (verse 17).**
- 3. see wrong behavior and don't just tolerate it but join in (verse 18).**

#### **4. refuse to control their tongues using them to cause harm to even their close relatives (verses 19–20).**

Jesus talks about these kinds of people in Matthew 7:21–23. They will come saying, “Lord, Lord.” But Jesus will declare He never knew them. Growing cold or ineffective spiritually is easier than we like to admit. For example, how often does praying before food turn into a rote recitation of mindless words? **It becomes a ritual. How often has the Holy Spirit gently asked you to speak to or pray for someone and you have ignored His voice? How about the time you continued in negative conversation about someone even after being given a warning signal from the Holy Spirit? All of us can attest to a segment of stagnated spiritual growth in an area where we have dug in our heels and refused to listen or discipline ourselves in order to grow. It takes vigilance to maintain a relationship of any kind. Why is it we act like our relationship with God will happen without any effort from us?**

God’s rebuke is that His people have lost sight of the relationship that gives flesh and blood to the covenant agreement they made with Him. They, and we, lose sight of the fact redemption costs a life. **God doesn’t need the sacrifice. We do. God doesn’t need church. We do. God doesn’t need prayer. We do. When we worship as if we are giving God something He needs, we are performing rituals. When we worship God knowing we need this relationship in order to have salvation, real peace and true joy, then we have it right.**

God lowers the gavel but, instead of passing judgment, He sends a severe warning: Remember God and His ways or He will tear you to pieces with no one to rescue you (Psalm 50:22)! **Change while you can. The key to God’s heart and a good relationship is to offer a sacrifice of praise (verse 23). This is the remedy for ritualism and the bridge to a great relationship with Almighty God.**

#### **Resource Packet Item 1: Relational Worship vs. Ritual Worship**

Distribute the work sheet and divide students into small groups of two or three people. Assign each section to one of the groups, and give them a few minutes to read the verses and write a response. Then have at least one group for each section share their thoughts with the class.

#### ***Discuss***

? Like little children, how do we sometimes mistake God’s longsuffering and patience for approval or weakness?

? How does our behavior resemble that of the wicked addressed in this passage?

## **Part 2—Entreat the Self-Sufficient One Listen to God’s Message**

Psalm 50:7–8

**[Psa 50:7-8 KJV] 7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I [am] God, [even] thy God. 8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, [to have been] continually before me.**

**Say:** How many times have you gone through a drive-through window and received the wrong order? Have you ever given your order through the automated speaker, have it repeated several times, and still find that it is wrong? Have you ever finally given up and decided you'll just go to the window and order in person? God must have had similar feelings as He addressed Israel in these verses. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

### **Human wisdom cannot find God's ways or please God in any way.**

God opens this part of the courtroom scene addressing His people with a command to listen (Psalm 50:7). If they will not examine their own behavior then He will. **They represent Him to the surrounding nations. They carry His name. We can see this same rationale in our culture today when people are fired from jobs because their behavior did not align with the image of the company. In like manner, we represent God to our world. Our lives should reflect His character. The famous Olympic gold medalist runner Eric Liddell put it this way, "We are all missionaries. Wherever we go, we either bring people nearer to Christ, or we repel them from Christ."**

**God reminds His people that their covenant agreement of sacrifice was with Him. His silence was not commendation. It was, and still is, the gift of allowing free will to choose righteousness. He calls them to account for the vow they made to honor and obey. The felony charge against them is one of keeping the letter of the Law but ignoring the Lawgiver.**

**The same can be said of any of us when we go through the motions of worship or "church" without ever engaging our minds or hearts. In other words, we leave a church service, our time of prayer, or Bible reading with no imprint from our Maker. We never actually "connect."**

#### ***Discuss***

? How does God call today for His people to listen to what He is saying to them?

? What charges do you think God would and would not bring against His people if He addressed them as He addresses Israel in this passage?

## **What God Wants From His People**

Psalm 50:9–15

**[Psa 50:9-15 KJV] 9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, [nor] he goats out of thy folds. 10 For every beast of the forest [is] mine, [and] the cattle upon a thousand hills. 11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field [are] mine. 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world [is] mine, and the fulness thereof. 13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? 14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: 15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.**

**Say:** As the Creator and Sustainer of everything, there is nothing God needs from us, but we deeply need Him. What He wants from us is exactly what He created us for—to fellowship with Him and to glorify Him. Our outward behavior is meaningless if that behavior is not reflective of hearts that are in right relationship with Him. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The sacrifice was a symbol of Israel's covenant agreement. **A wedding ring is a symbol of a covenant agreement between husband and wife; yet, many wear the ring while living outside the trust the ring conveys. Israel was unfaithful to the covenant God had made with them. The sacrifice was to be given with the mindset that "due to my sin, it should have been me." God reveals His knowledge of their heart condition. They offered the sacrifices out of ritual rather than out of worship for deliverance from sin. The same would hold true for anyone wearing a wedding band but living as if it held no meaning.**

The gavel comes down. God decrees their sacrifices are worthless unless given from a heart of thanksgiving (Psalm 50:14). King David knew this truth concerning covenant agreements with God. He said in 2 Samuel 24:24 that he would not offer a sacrifice that cost him nothing. **Dietrich Bonhoeffer spoke of "cheap grace" in The Cost of Discipleship. To treat our relationship with God as valueless is an affront to God, who created us in His image and made a way for us to escape eternal damnation.**

**The good news is that even though God's love requires justice, He is also our Deliverer (Psalm 50:15)! The sacrifice in covenant means God sees us through the sacrifice and we are judged based on His (Christ's) righteousness. The price for sin must be paid. God himself is willing to pay the price, but we at least must acknowledge the cost and accept the gift. It is wrong to take that sacrifice for granted. How can we share this exciting news with others if we neglect or deny it?**

### **Resource Packet Item 2: How Good Are You at Hearing and Obeying?**

This work sheet is a little different. Instead of distributing it to the students, you should distribute a sheet of paper and a pen, pencil, or crayon to each student. Read the instructions aloud. Then, you may either show the drawing from the front of the room or

distribute copies to each student so they can see how well they heard and followed the instructions.

### **Discuss**

? God *needs* nothing but what does He *want*?

? Name some traditions and rituals of the church. How are these different from doctrines of the church?

? What items would be on your self-check list or test to assess your spiritual walk and talk?

## **Part 3—Sing Praises to the Lord God Deserves Our Praise**

Psalm 147:1–6

**[Psa 147:1-6 KJV] 1 Praise ye the LORD: for [it is] good to sing praises unto our God; for [it is] pleasant; [and] praise is comely. 2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. 3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. 4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by [their] names. 5 Great [is] our Lord, and of great power: his understanding [is] infinite. 6 The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.**

**Say:** The unknown writer of Psalm 147 opens with a shout to praise the Lord! Can you list the three reasons given for this opening command? (They are good, pleasant, and fitting.) The writer tells us why praise is key to a right relationship with God. (Share your highlights from the following text.) (✓ Play the video available at [RadiantLifeCurriculum.com/Adult](http://RadiantLifeCurriculum.com/Adult).)

**If you have been around a toddler any length of time you probably discovered their propensity to ask the “why?” question repeatedly! So often we behave like toddlers with God. We insist on knowing the why before we listen and obey.**

God often starts with the why because He wants us to know the reasons He asks us to trust and obey. Why should we sing, praise, and give thanks? Because it is we who benefit. It is we who get blessed, and we grow spiritually. Why is that? Unless we are focused on Him, we tend to get very myopic in our thinking and perspective. But when we turn our focus to God and the heavens, our situation and events on earth slide into proper perspective. **The God who builds up Jerusalem— gathers exiles back home, heals the brokenhearted, and binds their wounds—is the same God who numbers**

**the stars and calls them by name! He loves us so much that He gave His Son to die for us. This is why we sing praises to Him!**

***Discuss***

? What reasons can you think of that you would want to sing praises to the Lord?

? How does praising God help the person who is doing the praising?

## **Sing Praise to Him**

Psalm 147:7–11

**[Psa 147:7-11 KJV] 7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: 8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. 9 He giveth to the beast his food, [and] to the young ravens which cry. 10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. 11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.**

**Say: Learning about the call to praise in the psalms is only an academic exercise if we do not put it into practice. God wants us to vocalize our praise for Him, not just nod in mental assent.** Just as parents long to hear “I love you” from their children, and spouses need to hear it from each other, God longs to hear our expressions of love and gratitude to Him. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The God who manages galaxies and calls stars by name amazingly turns to the details of our lives. His understanding and attention to detail reaches to every hair counted on our heads (Luke 12:7). **The cry of every human being is to be understood. God understands us and still loves us immensely. Scripture is constantly telling us this truth, yet many still see God as the “sheriff of the skies” just waiting to call us out and punish us. Some even see God as aloof and out of reach.** John 4:23 tells us that God is actively seeking people who worship Him “in spirit and in truth.” God wants a relationship with us. He loves us enough to send His only Son to bridge the gap caused by sin.

**Our praises and offerings of thanksgiving can hold tremendous power. Paul and Silas demonstrated this truth in Acts 16:16–34.** They prayed and sang from the inner dungeon of a Philippian jail. God moved, not just to rescue them, but to bring others to Him. We see this truth also in 2 Chronicles 20:20–27 when King Jehoshaphat sent singers to lead the battle. The mystery of praise exceeds the abilities of the logical mind. Therefore, we must trust and obey when it comes to giving sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.



This psalm was most likely written as part of the dedication of the rebuilt walls of Jerusalem under the leadership of Nehemiah. These exiled people of God were learning to renew and restore their faith. Wherever you are right now, you can do the same. Start praising and giving thanks. It may be difficult. That is why it is called a sacrifice. But just do it! You will be blessed and benefit.

### Resource Packet Item 3: ABCs of Gratitude

Distribute the work sheet and suggest that students take it home and use it during their personal time with God to reflect on all that God provides for them.

#### *Discuss*

- ? Name at least three things you can do that you know bring joy to the heart of God.
- ? How can we unleash the power of praise and thanksgiving on earth, especially in regard to fighting spiritual battles?

## What Is God Saying to Us?

**Say:** In both the Old and New Testaments God used stories, drama, miracles, parables, poetry, song and all manner of communication in order for us to realize how much He cares and understands. In Psalm 50, God used a courtroom to tell His people to repent and act righteously. In Psalm 147, He used the rising and setting of the sun, the daily tides, the stars twinkling above all to speak of His love and concern. Are we willing to hear His call for deliverance and share that call with those around us? The days of warning will come to an end. The day of summoning will arrive. Will you be ready? Will you have a host of friends and relatives ready with you? In the meantime, will you praise the Lord for all the benefits and blessings we receive when we live a life of gratitude?.

## Living It Out

### Ministry in Action

- Identify and correct any spiritual patterns of worship that are ritualistic rather than passionate and relational.
- Develop a strategy for excelling as a person with an attitude of gratitude.
- Offer to pray with and for a person who is negative, or experiencing pain, suffering, and brokenness.

## Daily Bible Readings

### Monday:

A Promise From God Almighty.  
Exodus 6:1–8

[Exo 6:1-8 KJV] 1 Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land. 2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I [am] the LORD: 3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the name of] God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. 4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give

them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. 5 And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. 6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I [am] the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: 7 And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I [am] the LORD.

#### **Tuesday:**

The Shadow of the Almighty.  
Psalm 91:1–10

**[Psa 91:1-10 KJV]** 1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, [He is] my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, [and] from the noisome pestilence. 4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth [shall be thy] shield and buckler. 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; [nor] for the arrow [that] flieth by day; 6 [Nor] for the pestilence [that] walketh in darkness; [nor] for the destruction [that] wasteth at noonday. 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; [but] it shall not come nigh thee. 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. 9 Because thou hast made the LORD, [which is] my refuge, [even] the most High, thy habitation; 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

#### **Wednesday:**

Questions From the Almighty.  
Job 40:1–10

**[Job 40:1-10 KJV]** 1 Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, 2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct [him]? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. 3 Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. 5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further. 6 Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 7 Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. 8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous? 9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? 10 Deck thyself now [with] majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

#### **Thursday:**

Sons and Daughters of the Almighty  
2 Corinthians 6:14 through 7:1

**[2Co 6:14-18 KJV] 14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.**

**[2Co 7:1 KJV] 1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

**Friday:**

Throne of God Almighty.  
Revelation 4:1–8

**[Rev 4:1-8 KJV] 1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. 2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and [one] sat on the throne. 3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and [there was] a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. 4 And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. 5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6 And before the throne [there was] a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, [were] four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7 And the first beast [was] like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle. 8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]; and [they were] full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.**

**Saturday:**

God Almighty and the Lamb.  
Revelation 21:22–27

**[Rev 21:22-27 KJV] 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb [is] the light thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. 27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither [whatsoever] worketh abomination, or [maketh] a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.**