

Psalms 69:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock
that hath horns and hoofs.

Analysis

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. Having moved through lament and imprecation, David transitions to vow of praise—a common lament psalm conclusion. "I will praise" (אֶלְלֵהָ/ahallela) is future tense, expressing confident expectation that God will deliver, warranting future worship. "The name of God" (שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים/shem-elohim) invokes not merely the divine title but God's revealed character, reputation, and covenant faithfulness manifest in deliverance.

"With a song" (בְּשִׁיר/veshir) indicates public, communal worship through singing—not merely private gratitude but corporate testimony to God's faithfulness. "Magnify him" (אֶגְדָּלֵנִי/agaddelenu) means to make great, declare great, exalt—not that God needs magnification (He's already great) but that David will publicly proclaim God's greatness so others recognize it. Mary's Magnificat echoes this: "My soul doth magnify the Lord" (Luke 1:46).

"With thanksgiving" (בְּתוֹדָה/vetodah) comes from yadah (to acknowledge, confess, give thanks). It's public acknowledgment of God as source of deliverance. This anticipates Christian worship where thanksgiving pervades prayer and praise (Ephesians 5:20, Colossians 3:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Historical Context

Vows of praise appear throughout lament psalms (Psalm 7:17, 9:1-2, 13:6, 22:22-25, 35:18, 43:4, 56:12, 71:22-24). They reflect covenant relationship: God commits to deliver His people; His people commit to praise Him when He does. This isn't bargaining but confidence—the righteous can vow future praise because God's faithfulness guarantees future deliverance.

Public praise served crucial communal function in Israel's worship. Individual testimonies built corporate faith. When one person publicly declared God's faithfulness in delivering them, it strengthened others' faith to trust God in their troubles. This pattern continues in Christian testimony and worship.

The language of magnifying God with song and thanksgiving pervades Psalms (Psalm 34:3, 40:16, 70:4, 138:2, 145:1-3) and shaped Christian hymnody. The Church's great hymns of praise follow this pattern: acknowledging need, celebrating deliverance, magnifying God's character, and calling others to join the praise.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does vowing to praise God even before deliverance comes demonstrate and strengthen faith?
2. What role does public testimony of God's faithfulness play in building corporate faith in the church?
3. How does praising God's 'name' (His revealed character) differ from merely thanking Him for blessings?

Interlinear Text

וְתִיטֵּב ב	לַיהוָה	מִשׁ וֹר	פָּר	מִקֶּרְן	מִפָּרִיס:
This also shall please	the LORD	than an ox	or bullock	that hath horns	and hoofs
H3190	H3068	H7794	H6499	H7160	H6536

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 13:15 (Parallel theme): By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Psalms 50:23 (Parallel theme): Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

1 Peter 2:5 (Parallel theme): Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.