

An old Christian woman lived next door to an atheist. Every morning she would step out on her porch and look into the sky and said, "Praise the Lord." Every morning the atheist would yell back there is no Lord. This went on for years. One day the woman stepped out on her porch and yelled praise the Lord for all you have given me and I am out of food and I praise you for that. The next morning when she went out on her porch there were two bags of groceries and again she yelled praise the Lord. The atheist said the Lord didn't provide that, I did. So she yelled praise the Lord you provided groceries for me and you sent the Devil the bill for them.

We are in the final Psalms of the book of Psalms and Psalm 147 is another praise Psalm. Time and time again the writer of these Psalms stresses the fact that God is to be worshipped and God is to be praised. **Now Biblical praise that is acceptable to God is always God-centered and not man-centered.** In this particular Psalm there is no question that the writer really wanted Israel to praise God. In fact, what we see in the Psalm is this:

**BECAUSE OF ALL THE GOOD THINGS GOD HAS DONE FOR HIS PEOPLE, IT IS GOOD TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP GOD.**

**Verse 1** begins by saying it is a good thing to do to offer praise to "our" God. That point of God being "our" God or Israel's God is stressed in **verses 1, 5, 7**. Worshipping and praising the LORD is a good thing for God's people to do and it certainly is something Israel should do.

**Now the praises that we are to the LORD are specific praises and not general.** In other words, it is not necessarily good when people just get together and just repeatedly say, "Praise the Lord." There is to be careful thought and purpose for the praise.

The type of praise that the Psalmist offered was one that carefully calculated specific reasons for the praise. **In fact, since "singing" (v. 1, 7) is mentioned as part of the praise, we may assume that these praise songs and thanksgiving songs were worship songs that specifically mentioned things God had done.**

Frankly, many things called praise songs today are not really that at all because they do not require that God's people think specifically about things God has done. One famous minister said there are so few real praise songs that it is an embarrassment.

**Now this specific praise Psalm has much to do with Israel.** This book of Psalms is a book for Israel and even though we may make great applications from the book, we must never lose sight of the importance of Israel and what God has done for her and what He will do for her.

There are at least fourteen reasons God's people can praise and worship God:

**REASON #1** – God’s people can praise God for what He has done for Israel. **147:2**

Jerusalem is Israel’s city. It is not the city of the Palestinians, Muslims or even Christians. It belongs to Israel. God is specifically involved in building up and rebuilding Jerusalem. This is true through all of time. God has His eye on Jerusalem. He had let her be built and rebuilt and He will do it one more time and when He does that, He will regather Israel and bring her to that city.

God has selected a key city which is Jerusalem, and He has selected a specific national group of people, Israel. God is going to rebuild the city and the temple and He is going to bring Israel to this very place and there He will be her God and she will be His people. When God finally does this, the entire world will praise God.

**REASON #2** – God’s people can praise God because He heals the brokenhearted and mends the wounded. **147:3**

Although this has application to all people who are sinners, because this is our condition, the fact is this is for Israel. Israel is a nation that needs God’s healing power. She has been scattered, broken and crushed for a long time. God intends to change that.

God is in the mending business. He delights in helping and healing those who have been bruised and broken and He will do that for Israel.

**REASON #3** – God’s people can praise God because He counts and names all the stars. **147:4**

God’s greatness and power are easily seen in the universe He has created. God knows the exact number of the stars and He has named them all. The stars are so numerous that no astronomer can even count them.

Now the reason why God brings this up is because He knows every true Israelite and the tribe from which they come. Remember God used this star analogy with Abraham (Gen. 15:5). God knows every Jew by name. And even as amazing as that, this is the same God who personally knows us. He knows the very number of hair on our heads.

**REASON #4** – God’s people can praise God because He has great strength. **147:5a**

God is not just strong, He has abundant strength. Whatever God wants to do, He has the power to do it. He can and will reverse things for Israel.

**REASON #5** – God’s people can praise God because His understanding is infinite. **147:5b**

There is no measuring the wisdom and understanding of God. There is no IQ test for God. He has all knowledge and all understanding of everything and it is unlimited in every area.

Frankly, we know very little and understand less than that. I remember years ago I read of a professor who gave an exam and a student wrote “only God knows the answers to these questions.” So the professor wrote back and said God gets an “A,” but you flunk.

**REASON #6** – God’s people can praise God because He helps the afflicted. **147:6a**

This is the only kind of person God does help. In order for one to receive help from God, he must be afflicted. Israel has been an afflicted nation and God will help her.

**REASON #7** – God’s people can praise God because He brings down the wicked. **147:6b**

God will knock down the arrogant wicked people. He will never exalt them but He will humiliate them.

**Verse 7** again reminds God’s people to sing praises to this wonderful God. Offer thanksgivings to God and use musical instruments to also offer up praise to God. In **verse 6**, one can praise and thank God for salvation of the afflicted and the humiliation of the wicked.

**REASON #8** – God’s people can praise God because He gives moisture to the earth. **147:8a**

This is such an important verse for those people experiencing drought. They can go to God and pray and ask God to send rain because He is the only One who can provide it.

Years ago in Pocatello we were experiencing a terrible drought and we decided to get the church together and pray that God would send the rain and sure enough in a very short time the rain was falling.

Sometimes people are interviewed in a drought and they say, we don’t know what we will do if we don’t get rain. Well pray and ask God to send the rain.

**REASON #9** – God’s people can praise God because He causes vegetation to grow. **147:8b**

Notice the emphasis on mountain grass. It has been observed that the best grass is high in the mountains in Alpine areas. Our horses and cattle and elk love that grass. Up on those mountains you cannot get any fertilizer or spray or cultivation. So the question comes who causes this grass to grow up there? God.

**REASON #10** – God’s people can praise God because He provides food for animals. **147:9**

The Great, Glorious, Sovereign, Majestic God is interested in little things, like little birds. God cares for all the animals in the world. He even cares about the little birds when they chirp because they are hungry.

It was once observed that the only birds that are in danger of lacking food and water are those kept in a cage by humans. God takes care of His birds and doesn't need our help.

If God would do that for animals, think what He will provide for humans who have been created in His image.

**REASON #11** – God's people can praise God because God delights and favors those who fear Him and wait on Him. **147:10-11**

God is not impressed with military war horses or strong military warriors. There is no question that a horse is a wonderful creation of God (Job 39:19-25). It is strong, proud, noble. God loves animals but He does not find delight in the strength of a horse or in the strong muscles of some military man. It is good to have a strong military, but always put God as the commander and chief.

God finds His great delight in those who fear Him and wait on Him. God does not delight in the mighty. God does not delight in numbers. God does not delight in the pride and the pomp. God delights in those who fear Him and wait on Him.

**REASON #12** – God's people can praise God because He has cared for Israel. **147:12-14**

This is something people living in the Church Age need to see and remember. God has done and will do things for Israel that He will not do for any other nation in the world. There specific things God does for Israel that He does not do for any other nation:

**Israeli Benefit #1** - God is to be praised for giving Israel a capital city Jerusalem. **147:12a**

**Israeli Benefit #2** - God is to be praised for giving Israel a spot for her Temple, Zion. **147:12b**

**Israeli Benefit #3** - God is to be praised for strengthening the bars of Israel's gates. **147:13a**

**Israeli Benefit #4** - God is to be praised for blessing the pedigree of Israel. **147:13b**

**Israeli Benefit #5** - God is to be praised for blessing Israel in her land. **147:14**

**REASON #13** – God's people can praise God because His Word affects the whole world.  
**147:15-18**

God's Word is operative worldwide whether or not people admit it or see it:

**Reality #1** - God's Word commands things to happen to this earth. **147:15a**

Think very carefully about these verses. People tend to grumble about the weather and yet the weather should be something for which we praise God. This weather includes snow and ice. This is from God and He commands it and sends it to where He wants it to be.

**Reality #2** - God's word is swiftly carried out on this earth. **147:15b**

God can swiftly bring storms to areas He desires. We don't know the reason, but He does.

**Reality #3** - God's Word commands the snow to fall. **147:16a**

**Reality #4** - God's Word commands the frost to scatter. **147:16b**

**Reality #5** - God's Word commands the ice to appear. **147:17a**

**Reality #6** - God's Word commands the cold to hit. **147:17b**

**Reality #7** - God's Word commands the ice and snow to melt. **147:18a**

**Reality #8** - God's Word causes the wind to blow. **147:18b**

**Reality #9** - God's Word causes the waters to flow. **147:18c**

I cringe when I hear some weather person on TV talk about mother nature. The weather comes from God. He sends it and He is to be praised and worshipped for it.

**REASON #14** – God's people can praise God because His Word and program are for Israel.  
**147:19-20**

God has done things and revealed things to Israel that he has not done for any other nation in the world.

**Fact #1** - God's Word is given to Israel.

**Fact #2** - God's statutes are given to Israel.

**Fact #3** - God's ordinances are given to Israel.

It is just like Paul said; we owe a great debt to Israel (Romans 9:4; 11:17-27).

God has done all of these wonderful things for Israel and yet look at **verse 20**, they have not known it. One day they will know it and when they do, it will be a great day of praise.

Israel hasn't known it and neither has most of the rest of the world.