

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Crescendo is a musical term that describes gradual increases in volume and pace. Most symphonies build up a crescendo toward the end and finish with a grand finale. We see the same spectacular effect in a firework show. The most amazing scene happens when fifty or a hundred fire-crackers explode in the sky. The audience will react with oohs and aahs. It is human nature to expect a happy ending. That sentiment leaves a longing in our hearts. We cannot wait for the next performance. We see a similar crescendo of worship in the book of psalm too. The last psalm concludes with a praise song to God. Praise is more than saying something nice to a person. Such comments must be based on facts, or else they are simply lies. They should be objective without any flattery. Moreover, praise comes from a humble heart when you recognize that someone is better than you in certain ways. Without a doubt, praising God is the theme of Psalm 150. The word “praise” is repeated thirteen times in six verses! God is the Master of the universe and a loving Father. He is full of wisdom and power. He is in control of history and our lives. He treats us with grace and mercy. For all those and many other attributes, He deserves our praise. Praise should be a natural reaction when we think of God.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 讚美的地點 Locations to Praise

The psalmist begins by referring to the locations to praise God in verse 1. He mentions two locations: God’s sanctuary and His mighty heavens. The word “sanctuary” is related holiness. It literally means a holy place. The writer may have the tabernacle and the temple in mind. The tabernacle was like a mobile church when the Israelites were in the wilderness. It was later replaced by the temple in Jerusalem. Both physical structures were the locations to worship God. God’s people brought animals there for priests to sacrifice. They also met there to celebrate Jewish festivals. Those buildings reminded people of God’s presence. Psalm 122:1 describes their enthusiasm when they thought of worshipping God: **I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord!”** The Israelites rejoiced as they gathered to worship God. Your friends will be happy when you suggest: “Let’s come to my house for a party this Saturday.” But do you feel the same excitement when you come here on Sunday? It is not only about meeting people, but it is about meeting God. Do you miss worshipping God with brothers and sisters when you are on vacation, on a business trip or when you stay home due to sickness? It could even be a season when you wandered away from the faith. Perhaps it was due to a setback in your life. You felt that God seemed to be distant from you. Or the busyness of life distracts you from following God. You simply did not have the mood to come to church. The good news is that God always welcomes you back. Return not only to regular church meetings, but also return to God’s family. The psalmist tells us that God is not only in His sanctuary. God also exists in His mighty heavens. Here “heavens” refer to God’s sphere of presence. That word is first used in Genesis, where it is translated as expanse. God created a space, which we call atmosphere, by separating the water in the sky from the water on the land. In today’s term, we can call that a

“hood.” Since God is the Creator of everything, His “hood” includes the whole universe. The idea is that worship should not be restricted to a church building, but it can be expanded to wherever we are. God will meet us even in places where we do not expect to find Him. He will make the place holy when He comes to us. Any location can be a worship hall. You can sing to God, and think of some Bible verses as you pray silently. You can worship God in such a simple way when you are stuck in a traffic jam, when you are sleepless at night or when you are waiting in a doctor’s office. Praise God for His greatness, His grace and His love. Ask Him to give you courage and strength to go through the challenge at hand. Thank Him in advance for the results.

## 2. 讚美的原因 Occasions to Praise

Besides telling us the locations to praise God, the psalmist also suggests some occasions for us to praise God. He brings up God’s mighty deeds and His excellent greatness in verse 2. God deserves our praise because of His powerful works. He displayed His power through creation. His words alone are full of power. Genesis says everything came into existence when God spoke. He continues to sustain the world, and protect and provide for His children by His power. He supplies all of our needs, and He defends us from harm. Above all that, God demonstrated His power in our salvation. He rescued us from the dark domain and transferred us into the Kingdom of Light. God deserves our praise not only because of His works, but also because of His character. Think of God like famous people. Their talents or their personalities attract people to them. It can be their artistic skills, athletic abilities, creative inventions or amazing courage. Those qualities inspire people to follow their examples because there is an inclination for us to pursue excellence. God is our ultimate role-model because He is the final source of all virtues. For example, Psalm 103:8 says: **The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.** We find qualities such as mercy, grace, patience and love in this verse. Those are the ways God treats us. He understands that we are fragile and limited in every way. We can easily fall to sin. Yet we are too stubborn to confess our wrongdoings. We prefer our ways over God’s way. We are forgetful of His blessings too. Thank God that He never gives up on us. He is always the Lord of second chance. We should praise God for all that and many other reasons. The fact is that we will not praise God if we do not realize that He is infinitely bigger than us. We will not praise Him either if we think that we can take care of everything ourselves. Once I saw a dump truck on the road. There is a slogan on the side that reads: “We haul the earth!” That is quite prideful. The company thinks that it has the strength to pull the world. I guess what it actually means is: we carry dirt. No matter what talents and experience you have, and regardless of the title you hold at work or how many awards you have won, you are but a created person. All that you have is from God. Praise Him for that. You can make it personal too. For example, praise God for giving some of His wisdom to the doctor who treats your disease. Praise God for sharing His patience with your boss who overlooks your mistake. Praise God for His enduring love, which is reflected in how you deal with your kid’s rebellion. There are other occasions where God’s character is revealed.

## 3. 讚美的表達 Expressions of Praise

We have studied the locations and occasions to praise God. Next, we will look at the expressions of praise. The psalmist encourages us to use music to praise God. Music is a wonderful blessing from God. He gives some people inspiration to compose music, talents to play instruments and

skills to sing and dance. Verses 3-5 contain a list of different instruments. There are wind, percussion and string instruments just like what a modern symphony orchestra has. Trumpet and pipe are something you can blow. Tambourine and cymbals give the beats when you hit them. Lute and harp have strings that you can pluck. Every instrument makes specific sound. It will be a beautiful harmony when they are played together. Besides instruments, the writer also talks about dancing. It goes without saying that singing is a key part in worship, though the psalmist does not specify it. One example where all these components are blended together is found in 2 Samuel 6:5 – **And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.** At that time, David was crowned as the king. He moved the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. The passage says David danced. It was a joyful atmosphere. David himself was a musician. After he became a king, ministries at the tabernacle got more organized. Of the twelve tribes of Israel, God only selected the Levites to do sacred works. Different teams were given specific roles as priests, guards and treasurers, etc. 1 Chronicles 25:1 tells us that there are designated musicians too: **David and the chiefs of the service also set apart for the service the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who prophesied with lyres, with harps, and with cymbals...** Those three Levite men taught their sons how to sing and play instruments. There were altogether twenty-four teams of 12 people each who rotated in music ministries. They used music to lead songs in worship. God also gives musical talents to some people in our church as well. We are particularly blessed with our English worship team. Members practice twice a week and lead us to sing. They play djembe, tambourine, egg, guitar, bass guitar and piano. Of course, we have song-leaders and pianists on the Chinese side too. Other than the worship teams, we also have an adult choir and a children's choir. Very often, the congregation applauds at the end of a presentation to show appreciation. We understand that the choirs are not performing. Instead of clapping hands, you may consider responding with "amen" or "praise the Lord." That reminds me of the choir at the Baptist college I attended. Members called themselves priests of music. The team represents the congregation by presenting music like an offering to God. In the same way, we are giving God a sacrifice of praise when we worship Him with music in church.

#### 4. 讚美的群體 Creation all Praise

The psalmist urges his readers to praise God in every location, for all occasions and with different expressions. Finally, he invites all creation to form a huge choir to praise God. It is not just for humans. Animals make different sound too. There are also wind and waves, rivers and oceans, thunder and volcanic eruption. They are like various instruments in a symphony orchestra. God is the composer and conductor. He is also the only audience to enjoy the works of His hand. I remember an interesting scene a few weeks ago. I was working in the church office. Suddenly, I heard music playing from a car outside. Then a lady started singing by her car. She was praising the Lord. According to the psalmist, nature would be echoing in ways she did not realize. God receives praise from all that He created. Think of it like a birthday celebration for a great grand-parent. Member from few generations throw a huge party for granny. They present good wishes to the star. The heart of the senior person must be filled with happiness and contentment. Compared to a birthday party, our praise to God is not an annual or a weekly activity. It is an ongoing practice that will be extended forever when we go to heaven. We see such a scene in Revelation 5:11-12 – **11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and**

thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” Angels and saints begin with their praise to Jesus, God’s sacrificial Lamb. Then the rest of the creation respond in verse 13: **And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”** Jesus deserves all the power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor and glory. This gigantic choir seems to run out of words to describe the fullness of the Lord. They sing with great enthusiasm and strength. It will be the most glorious and loud hallelujah chorus we have ever heard. We live in an individualistic society. We often uphold personal freedom and choices but lose sight of the corporate nature of our faith. Worship may become a private entertainment. We can listen to Christian music while driving or showering. We can watch online sermon videos from any speaker at any time. Coming to church on Sunday becomes less appealing and even optional. Do not forget each believer is part of the big choir. Your absence will be similar to a guitar with a broken string or a piano losing a key. The result is not just a lower attendance but also an incomplete congregation. No one can represent you to praise God, just like no one can offer money on your behalf. Therefore, do not just think about yourself when it comes to worship. Put your focus on God and the rest of the brothers and sisters. Do not choose to come, but want to come and prepare to come. God is not interested in seeing all the seats filled. He is looking for people whose hearts are filled with praise for Him.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Praise should be a natural reaction when we think of God. We should worship God everywhere. Worship Him for His works and His attributes. Worship Him with music. Worship Him together with all creation. The book of psalm ends on a high note. Someone says this book is like the story of Christian life. Psalm 1 describes the contrasting results of obeying God’s Word versus rejecting it. Believers are those who are determined to follow God. That is the starting point of our spiritual life. For the rest of the book of psalm describe various positive and negative moments. Life is a mix of struggles and victories, losses and gains, setbacks and successes. Our emotions can swing from sorrow to joy, from tears to laughter, and from heartache to celebration. I am sure we can identify with all those experience. But through all the ups and downs, the psalmists testify to us that God is truthful and faithful. That is why the book finishes with a praise. I hope that is your conclusion too. God is real and He works in our lives. We can continue to trust Him. He deserves all our praise.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

昇華是一個音樂術語，描述音量和節奏的逐漸增加。大多數交響樂曲都以昇華作結束。我們在煙火表演中看到了同樣的效果。當幾十個煙火在天空爆發時，便會產生壯觀的場面，觀眾會有嘆為觀止的反應。期待大團圓結局是人的本性。這份感覺在我們心中留下期盼，讓我們嚮往下一次的表演。我們在詩篇中也看到了類似的喜樂的昇華。最後一首詩以讚美神結束整卷書。讚美不只是對別人說一些好話。這些評語必須根據事實，否則就是謊言。它們也應該是客觀的，沒有任何奉承。此外，讚美必須出自一顆謙卑的心，因為你承認別人在某些方面比你優勝。毫無疑問，讚美神是詩篇 150 篇的主題。在六節經文中，「讚美」這個字出現了十三次！神是宇宙的主宰，也是一位慈愛的父親。祂充滿智慧和能力。祂掌管歷史和我們的生命。祂以恩典和憐憫對待我們。因著這些和許多其他屬性，神配得我們讚美。當我們想到神之時，讚美祂應該是自然的反應。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 讚美的地點 Locations to Praise

詩人首先在第 1 節中提到讚美神的地點。「聖所」這個字與聖潔有關。它的字面意思是神聖的地方。作者可能想到的是會幕和聖殿。當以色列人在曠野時，會幕就像一個流動的教會。後來它被耶路撒冷的聖殿所取代。兩個建築物都是敬拜神的場所。神的子民將動物帶到那裡給祭司獻祭。他們還在那裡聚集並慶祝猶太節期。這些建築物使人想到神的同在。詩篇 122:1 描述他們想到敬拜神時的熱情：**人對我說：我們往耶和華的殿去，我就歡喜。**以色列人聚集敬拜神之時非常喜樂。當你邀請朋友說：「這個週六來我家開派對吧。」，他們肯定會很高興。但是當你在星期日來到這裡時，你是否也感受到同樣的興奮呢？來聚會不只是與人交流，更重要的是與神相遇。當你度假、出差、生病在家時，你是否會想念與弟兄姐妹一起敬拜神呢？又或許你曾經遠離神。可能你碰到挫折。你感覺神似乎離你很遙遠。或是生活的忙碌使你分心，無法緊緊跟隨神。你根本沒有心情去聚會。好消息是神總是歡迎你回來。目的不只是恢復固定聚會，也是回到神的家。詩人告訴我們，神不只是出現在聖所，祂也存在於祂顯能力的穹蒼。這裡的「穹蒼」是指神存在的範圍。這個字首次出現在《創世記》

中，被翻譯為「空氣」，意思是空間。神將天上的水氣與地上的水分開，我們稱那個空間為大氣層。用今天的話來說，我們可以稱之為神的「地頭」。由於神是萬物的創造者，祂的地頭包括整個宇宙。因此敬拜不應該局限於教堂大樓，也可以擴展到任何地方。神甚至會在我們意想不到的地方與我們相遇。當祂來到我們中間時，那個地方便成為聖潔。因此任何場所都可以成為禮拜堂。你可以向神唱歌，和在禱告時思想一些經文。當你塞車的時候、晚上失眠的時候、在診所等候時，你都可以用這麼簡單的方式來敬拜神。讚美神的偉大、恩典和慈愛。請求祂給你勇氣和力量來應付當前的挑戰。也預先為結果感謝神。

## 2. 讚美的原因 Occasions to Praise

詩人除了告訴我們讚美神的地點之外，也建議了一些讚美神的原因。他在第 2 節提到神大能的作為和祂極美的大德。神透過創造世界展示了祂的能力。光是祂的話就充滿了力量。創世記說，神藉著講話創造了一切。祂繼續以能力維持世界，並保護和供應祂的兒女。神滿足我們的需要，並保護我們免受傷害。更重要的是，神以大能拯救我們。祂把我們從黑暗的權勢中拯救出來，將我們遷移到光明的國度。神配得我們讚美，不只是因為祂的作為，也因為祂的品格。我們都會仰慕一些名人。他們的優點或個性吸引著人們。例如他們的藝術才華、運動才能、創意發明或驚人的勇氣。這些特質激勵人們效法他們的榜樣，因為我們有追求卓越的傾向。神是我們最終的模範，因為祂是所有美德的最終來源。例如，詩篇 103:8 說：**耶和華有憐憫，有恩典，不輕易發怒，且有豐盛的慈愛。**我們在這節經文中找到憐憫、恩典、忍耐和慈愛等特質。神就是以這些方式對待我們的。祂明白我們在各方面都軟弱和不足。我們很容易陷入罪中。同時我們又固執，不願意承認自己的錯誤。我們喜歡自己的做事方式勝過神的方式。我們也常常忘記祂的祝福。感謝神，祂從未放棄我們。祂一直都是第二次機會的主。由於這些以及許多其他原因，我們應該讚美神。事實上，如果我們不承認神比我們偉大，我們就不會讚美祂。如果我們以為自己能夠解決一切問題，我們也不會讚美神。有一次我在路上看到一輛大卡車。車子側面有一句標語，上面寫著：「我們牽動地球。」好大的口氣啊！這家公司認為自己有能力拉動整個世界。我想它實際上的意思是：我們運送泥土。無論你有什麼才幹、有什麼經驗，無論你有什麼頭銜，得過多少獎項，你都只是一個受造的人。你所擁有的一切都來自神。你應該為所有事情讚美神。你可以聯想你獨特的處境。例如，讚美神賜智慧給醫生，讓他治療你的疾病。讚美神分享耐心給你的老闆，讓祂體諒你的錯誤。讚美神加給你持久的愛，讓你接納孩子的叛逆。還有其他一些場合可以顯明神的品格。

## 3. 讚美的表達 Expressions of Praise

我們討論了讚美神的地點和原因。接下來我們來看看讚美神的表達方式。詩人鼓勵我們用音樂來讚美神。音樂是來自神的美妙祝福。祂賜給一些人創作音樂的靈感、演奏樂器的才能以及唱歌和跳舞的技巧。第 3-5 節列出不同的樂器。就像現代交響樂團一樣，有管樂器、打擊樂器和弦樂器。號角和簫都是可以吹的。當你擊鼓和敲鈸時，可以帶動節拍。最後還有瑟和琴。每種樂器都會發出獨特的聲音。當它們一起演奏時，將會產生美妙的和諧。除了樂器之外，作者還談到了舞蹈。雖然詩人沒有提到唱歌，但是詩歌是敬拜的關鍵部分。我們可以在撒母耳記下 6:5 看到這些元素如何配合在一起：**大衛和以色列的全家在耶和華面前，用松木製造的各樣樂器和琴、瑟、鼓、鈸、鑼，作樂跳舞。**那時，大衛已經成為君王。他把約櫃搬回耶路撒冷。經文說大衛跳舞。我們可以想像當時的歡樂氣氛。大衛是個音樂家。他成為王之後，組織會幕的各樣服事。在以色列的十二個支派中，神只揀選利未人從事聖工。不同的團隊被安排特定的角色，如祭司、守衛和財務等。歷代志上 25:1 告訴我們當時也有指定的樂手：**大衛和眾首領分派亞薩、希幔，並耶杜頓的子孫彈琴、鼓瑟、敲鈸、唱歌...**那三位利未人教導自己的兒子唱歌和演奏樂器。共有二十四組，每組 12 人，輪流擔任音樂事工。他們用音樂來帶領眾人唱詩。神也賜給我們教會中的一些人音樂才能。英文堂的敬拜小組每週練習兩次並帶領我們唱歌。他們演奏的樂器包括鼓、鈴鼓、吉他、低音吉他和鋼琴。當然，中文堂也有領詩和彈鋼琴的同工。除了敬拜小組之外，我們還有成人詩班和兒童詩班。很多時候，會眾在詩班獻詩後鼓掌以表示鼓勵。我們知道詩班不是在表演。下次你可以考慮說「阿們」或「讚美主」作回應。這讓我想起了我就讀的浸信會大學的合唱團。成員們稱自己為音樂的祭師。團隊透過獻唱彷彿代表會眾向神獻祭。同樣，當我們在教會裡用音樂敬拜神之時，我們就是在向神獻上讚美的祭物。

#### 4. 讚美的群體 Creation all Praise

詩人鼓勵讀者在任何地點、以不同的原因、用各樣的表達方式讚美神。最後，他邀請所有受造之物組成一個龐大的讚美群體。它不僅包括人類。動物也會發出不同的聲音。還有風浪、河流和海洋、雷聲和火山爆發。它們就像交響樂團的各種樂器。神是作曲家和指揮家。但祂也是唯一欣賞自己作品的觀眾。這讓我想記幾週前的一個有趣的情形。我當時在教會辦公室工作。忽然，我聽到外面車子傳來音樂聲。然後一位女士站在她的車旁唱歌。她在讚美主。根據詩篇作者的說法，大自然會陪伴那位女士一起讚美神。神從祂所創造的萬物中接受讚美。我們可以把它想像為一位曾祖父母的生日慶祝。幾代的家人舉辦一個盛大的宴會。一些代表祝賀壽星。老人家的中心一定是充滿喜樂和滿足感。比較生日派對，我們對神的讚美不是每年或每週的活動，乃是一個持續的習慣。當

我們到天堂時，讚美會永遠延續下去。我們在啟示錄 5:11-12 節中看到一個場面：11 我又看見且聽見，寶座與活物並長老的周圍有許多天使的聲音；他們的數目有千千萬萬，12 大聲說：曾被殺的羔羊是配得權柄、豐富、智慧、能力、尊貴、榮耀、頌讚的。天使和聖徒首先讚美神的羔羊 – 主耶穌。然後其餘的受造之物在第 13 節回應：我又聽見在天上、地上、地底下、滄海裡，和天地間一切所有被造之物，都說：但願頌讚、尊貴、榮耀、權勢都歸給坐寶座的和羔羊，直到永永遠遠！耶穌配得所有的權柄、豐富、智慧、能力、尊貴和榮耀。這個大型的詩班用盡了他們能想到的言語來形容主的豐盛。他們高聲並熱情地歌唱。這將是我們聽過的陣容最大、最洪亮的哈利路亞大合唱。我們生活在一個個人主義的社會。我們有時候太重視自己的自由和選擇，但卻忽略了信仰群體的合一。於是崇拜變成私人娛樂。我們可以在開車或洗澡時聽基督徒音樂。我們可以隨時觀看任何講員網上的講道影片。星期日去教會失去了吸引力，甚至是可有可無的。但不要忘記每個信徒都是整個讚美群體的一部分。你的缺席就像吉他斷了弦或鋼琴丟了琴鍵一樣。結果不僅是出席率下降，而且會眾不完整。沒有人可以代替你讚美神，就像沒有人可以代表你奉獻金錢一樣。因此，當你來崇拜的時候，不要只考慮自己。把你的注意力放在神和其他弟兄姐妹身上。你不應該只是選擇來，而是渴望來、並且做好準備而來。神關心的不是填滿所有座位。祂是尋找心中充滿對祂讚美的人。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

當我們想到神之時，讚美祂應該是自然的反應。我們可以在任何地方敬拜神。我們要因著祂的作為和祂的屬性而敬拜祂。我們用音樂來敬拜祂。而且我們和一切受造物一起敬拜祂。詩篇以一個高峰結束。有人說這卷書就像基督徒的生命歷程。詩篇第一篇對比遵守神話語與拒絕神話語截然不同的結果。信徒是那些立志跟隨神的人。這是我們屬靈生命的起步點。詩篇的其餘部分描述了各種正面和負面的時刻。生活充滿了掙扎和勝利、損失和收穫、挫折和成功。我們的情緒可以從悲傷轉為喜樂，從淚水轉為歡笑，從難過轉為慶祝。我相信我們能夠認同所有這些經驗。但在這些起起伏伏中，眾多詩人向我們見證神是真實和信實的。因此這卷書以讚美作結束。我希望這也是你的結論。神是真實的，祂在我們的生命中工作。我們可以繼續信靠祂。祂配得我們所有的讚美。