



(11) The Exalted God

Humbly living to bring Him glory (Ephesians 2:4-7)

We are not very good at acknowledging God's glory due to overvaluing our own importance. Life's path gets exciting when we finally begin to understand and respond to our Lord's glorious person.

1) The Largely Neglected Truth

Most believers lack living with a good understanding of God's exalted person. This is much like living on crutches.

- Duty to praise and exalt God, "Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His footstool..." (Ps 99:5).
- Our life purpose: [Glorify God](#), and to [enjoy him](#) forever (Westminster Shorter Catechism).
- Degenerated worship is common.
- Disobedience displays opposition to God's glory.
- "Did I not say to you, if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" (John 11:40). Belief ushers us into God's presence. Unbelief escorts us away.

Breakout: Exploring God's Glory in the Book of Job

Write something discovered about God's glory on the empty block to the right.

"Behold, God is exalted in His power; Who is a teacher like Him?" (Job 36:22).	
"Remember that you should exalt His work, of which men have sung" (Job 36:24).	
"Behold, God is exalted, and we do not know Him; The number of His years is unsearchable" (Job 36:26).	
"The Almighty--we cannot find Him; He is exalted in power; And He will not do violence to justice and abundant righteousness" (Job 37:23).	

2) The Meaning of Exalt

There are several Biblical Hebrew words meaning to exalt. Daniel 4:37 reflects this, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

King Nebuchadnezzar, after his senses returned to him and he was properly humbled, could rightly acknowledge God's exalted person. He used three similar words to speak of God's glory.

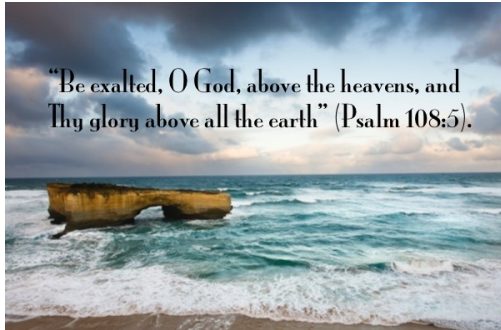
- **Praise** emphasizes laud, that is, words that emphasize one's greatness.
- **Exalt** in the Hebrew has a sense of being lifted up to a high position. Thrones are often lifted up on platforms.
- **Honor** has a sense of adorn and glorify. The Hebrew root word means lift or raise up one's view toward another.

All these meanings overlap and describe God's glorious person with our inferior words. When man or angels see God in His glory, they are found on their knees bowing before Him. Nebuchadnezzar was obviously emphasizing God's glory and so used several words to describe the Lord. God is glorious and demands all peoples, creatures and creation to reflect that glory back to His great and exalted person.

Contrasting holy and exalted

The two words holy and exalted have different meanings and yet retain a similarity.

- Holiness demands a distance from God gained through God's dissimilarity to us. God is holy, that is, He is set apart from us by His person and ways. We do not see that distance in the Garden before man's sin.
- Exalted distinguishes itself from holiness by its height. The Lord is lofty, that is, his position and status are unapproachable. Isaiah's famous vision records this, "In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted,¹² with the train of His robe filling the temple" (Isaiah 6:1).



While holiness speaks about the needed distance from us due to God's character, His exalted position demands distance due to His honor and prestige. Both words remind us of how unapproachable God is. He is far-off. The exalted One is high and removed from us.

God's masterful plan (Ephesians 2:4-7)

"4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4-7).

The full glory of God's awesome plan is seen in Ephesians 2:4-7 where He reveals the measures He has taken through Jesus Christ to share His holiness and glory with His people. God reconciles (unties) us with Him (Ephesians 2:5) and raises us up in Christ (Ephesians 2:6) all because of His rich love toward us (Eph 2:4). Why? Ephesians 2:8 says it is to display His surpassing (think glorious) graciousness. God further exalts Himself by displaying His kindness in our lives.

3) The Ways God is Exalted

God is glorious and demands all peoples, creatures and creation to reflect that glory back to His great and exalted person. All that we have comes from Him but for His ultimate purposes.

- God's exaltation is untouchable. "The LORD is high above all nations; His glory is above the heavens" (Ps 113:4).
- Hardness of Pharaoh's heart: "Still you (Pharaoh) exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go" (Ex 9:17). God drowns them in the sea. – The Old Egypt died

"Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea" (Ex 15:1).

- We exalt Him by deliberately recognizing and praising His glorious person.
- We exalt Him by how our lives affirm His good ways by choosing to live for them.
- We exalt Him by delighting in His glorious person ("enjoy Him forever").

If your spiritual life is boring...

Living in light of God's glory is never boring or repetitive. The problem is largely due to not being able to sufficiently comprehend God's glory but is compounded by our resistance to living in conformity with His exalted person. We are blinded to it and rather focus on our desires rather than His. If the sun is hidden by the clouds, it is not due to its absence but our blindness. Take an adventure. Begin to get serious about living for God's glory. The cloud's will readily depart as you purpose to focus on His person and pleasure.

"Now I will arise," says the LORD,

"Now I will be exalted, now I will

be lifted up" (Isa 33:10).



12 Interestingly, both these words are from the same root Hebrew word, rum, but in different verb forms.

An assignment

- Think about how much of your life is centered on bringing God glory. Repent as needed.
- Reflect the ways you have 'seen' or experienced God's exalted person. Write down the details associated with each experience.
- Search your heart to see if you desire to know more of God's glorious person. Reflect on your answer and pray as appropriate.
- List any ways that you steal glory from God to yourself. This happens when we accept or seek the applause of man without giving God His due glory through the way He has enabled us to accomplish what we have done.
- Share one personal 'glimpse' of God's glorious person or ways and one area that holds you back from further exalting Him.

“Delighting in his glory being known and enjoyed, God delights in himself and makes himself his end.” ¹³