

DEVOTIONAL SERIES
PRAISE TO THE LORD
MAJOR EVERETT BARROW



One Sunday morning, Joachim Neander and some of his rebellious friends decided to attend church, just to have fun, heckle the congregation, and provoke the preacher. Joachim had no idea how his life would change on that morning as the Holy Spirit opened his eyes and convicted his heart. He repented and gave his life to Jesus. Following this dramatic experience, he would go on to be the assistant to the preacher of that church, and a schoolteacher, giving him the opportunity to mentor other young men in the ways of Christ.

Ten years after his commitment to Christ, at age 30, Joachim went to be with his Lord. It was during his severe illness with tuberculosis that he penned these lyrics. Even in all his suffering, he saw God as the One who was worthy of all praise. The psalmist proclaims this in Psalm 145:1-3 (NIV) which says,

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

It seems easier to praise the Lord during the joyful and peaceful experiences in life. However, to do so in the darkest moments, that might be very different. Yet Joachim was able to lift his heart and proclaim his “praise to the Almighty, that He is our health and salvation. His goodness and mercy, daily given.”

In these moments alone with God, reflecting upon what God has done and what He can still do, Joachim captures his thoughts throughout this song, reminding us to remember, to reflect, and to ponder (*Ponder anew what the Almighty can do!*) And the overwhelming thought that God the Almighty wants to be in relationship with us (*He who with love doth befriend thee*). What an overwhelming thought – being a friend of God!

And so, we respond! A resounding praise that the whole world will hear:

**MY PRAISE WILL LIFT JESUS HIGHER,
SO THE WORLD WILL KNOW HIS LOVE.**

May our testimony speak of the faithfulness of God through the beautiful experiences and the darkest experiences of life. May we, like Joachim, praise the Almighty as He is the only One worthy of our praise. Let’s send a resounding praise, lift Jesus higher, so that all people will be drawn to Him.

Prayer

O Lord, You are worthy of our praise. May our lives speak clearly of a God whose greatness no one can fully understand, but yet One who is so personal that we can become friends of God!