



**Thomas Lifson: “New Orleans, the Tragedy”; Solomon’s Labefaction; True Happiness Defined in the Psalms; the Meaning of Halelu-yah**

- (91) True happiness is a stable, consistent mental attitude which does not depend on emotion, people, things, or circumstances. It is an inner resource that sustains during times of adversity and stabilizes during periods of prosperity.
- (92) The concept of true and complete happiness is addressed thoroughly in the Psalms under the word:

אֶשֶׁר *'esher* - “complete happiness”

**Psalm 1:1** - How happy [ אֶשֶׁר *'esher* ] is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the wheel-tracks of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers. [ **those who arrogantly mock the Word of God** ].

**Psalm 34:8** - O taste and see that the Lord is good; how happy is the man who takes refuge in Him!

**Psalm 40:4** - How happy is the man who has made the Lord the source of his confidence [ מִבְּטַח *mivtach*: **when the Lord is the object of one’s confidence the result is true happiness** ].

**Psalm 84:12** - O Lord of the armies, how happy is the man who places his trust in You.

**Psalm 112:1** - Proclaim thanksgivings to the Lord [ הַלֵּל *halal* plus יְהוָה *Yehovah* results in the liturgical interjection: הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה *hal'lu-yah* ]! How happy is the man who reveres the Lord, who greatly delights in keeping his mandates.

- (93) The key issue in completing the fifth floor of the edification complex is to physically separate from those who are negative (Psalm 1:1), separate unto the Lord for divine protection (Psalm 34:8), grow in grace to the point of spiritual self-esteem (Psalm 40:4), develop personal love for God so that you place your complete trust in Him (Psalm 84:12), and worship the Lord by keeping his mandates (Psalm 112:1).
- (94) The result of these things is a steady advance through the sophisticated spiritual life during which one’s happiness steadily increases until it maximizes at the 5th Floor of the complex.
- (95) It is here that the believer’s worship reaches its maximum efficiency and his reverence and reciprocity is expressed with prayers of thanksgiving toward God summarized by the liturgical interjection that begins what are called the Hallel Psalms: הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה *hal'lu-yah*: “Proclaim thanksgivings to the Lord!”
- (96) This has become a vocative that people shout in certain churches in response to something the preacher says with which they agree and want him and others to know that they already knew it. It is much more sophisticated than this as is indicated by the word’s analysis in:



Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, & Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 217-18:

הלל *halal*. This root connotes being sincerely and deeply thankful for and satisfied in lauding superior qualities or great acts of the object. (p. 217)

The most frequent use of (the) root relates to praising the God of Israel. Nearly a third of such passages occur in the Psalms. The largest number of these are imperative summons to praise. The themes surrounding and included in the verbal expressions of praise (the psalms) show that it is imperative that God in His deity be recognized and that the fullness thereof be affirmed and stated. This is to be offered in an attitude of delight and rejoicing. Belief and joy [i.e., happiness] are inextricably intertwined. This praise could involve choirs and musical instruments, too. It could be expressed in speaking (Jeremiah 31:7), singing (Psalm 69:30), and with dancing (Psalm 149:3). Such praise was an essential element of formal public worship. (pp. 217-18)

- (97) The Shulammitte Woman possessed within her soul the structure of an edification complex and the power of its doctrines and her mental attitude of true happiness enabled her to maintain her personal reputation while protecting the relationship God had ordained for her and her right man, the Shepherd Lover.