

Building the Presence of God in Your Life

Read [Psalm 22:1-5](#)

[Psalm 22:3 \(KJV\)](#)

³“*But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*”

[Psalm 22:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³“**Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.**”

After God delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt, he took them to the Promised Land, “**a land flowing with milk and honey.**” The Promised Land was no picnic, however. It was filled with enemies. Israel had to defeat these enemies before they could enjoy the milk and honey.

Old Testament Israel is a prophetic type, or symbol, of the New Testament church—the church as a whole, and every believer in it. Their natural experiences parallel our spiritual experiences. Their experiences were recorded in Scripture to teach us, as the Apostle Paul makes clear in the following verses:

⁴“**For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.**”

[ROMANS 15:4](#)

¹¹“**Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**”

[1 CORINTHIANS 10:11](#)

Like Israel, we as Christians have been delivered from slavery—from the spiritual slavery to sin and guilt. Like Israel, we as Christians have been led to our Promised Land—not a geographical location, but a life of blessed Christian living wherever we call home. (Some have mistakenly assumed the Old Testament’s Promised Land to be a symbol of heaven, but there are no enemies in heaven. The Old Testament’s Promised Land is a symbol of the blessed Christian life God wants for every believer.) And like Israel, we face enemies seeking to deny us our Promised Land experience—enemies such as temptations, bad habits, discouragements, unkind people, difficult circumstances, financial needs, and the like.

These enemies are meant to frustrate God’s good plan for our life. They often arrive just as we’re about to make progress of some kind—if we’ve taken a step to grow spiritually, if we’ve just become a Christian, if we’ve stepped out in faith to serve the Lord in some way. Things will pop up to make our progress in life, especially our spiritual progress, a challenge. Enemies reside in our Promised Land, just as in Israel’s.

How did God prepare Israel for the enemies they would face? On the way out of Egypt, and before they reached the Promised Land, he told them to stop in the desert and build him a home among them. This home was an elaborate tent, called the tabernacle,

which allowed God to travel with the Israelites wherever they went. It was the prototype of the later permanent temple built in Jerusalem. It was built according to exact instructions given by God ([Exodus 25:9](#), [Hebrews 8:5](#)).

⁹ **“According to all that I am going to show you, *as* the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.”**

[Exodus 25:9](#)

⁵ **“Who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “SEE,” He says, “THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.”**

[Hebrews 8:5](#)

It was God’s home among the Israelites, and their key to victory in the Promised Land. God himself was with them, fighting their battles for them, and keeping his word to them ([Joshua 23:14](#)).

¹⁴ **“Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.”**

[Joshua 23:14](#)

We also must prepare for our battles by building God a home among us. But we don’t do it with an elaborate tent or a lavish temple. We do it with praise. Remember the Scripture we looked at earlier in the chapter:

“But thou art holy, *O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*”

[PSALM 22:3, KJV](#) (*emphasis added*)

We build God’s presence in our life by praising him. He “*inhabits*” that praise. He already lives in us as Christians (see [1 Corinthians 3:16](#) and [1 John 4:15](#)), but his *manifest* presence—his active, life-changing presence—is increased in our life when we praise him.

¹⁶ **“Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?”**

[1 Corinthians 3:16](#)

¹⁵ **“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.”**

[1 John 4:15](#)

That manifest presence will defeat our enemies, just like it did Israel’s.

Are you facing an enemy? Spend time in your prayer life, and as you go about your day, praising God. Say good things about Him. Describe something wonderful He’s done, or something wonderful about whom He is. Build His presence in your life and He’ll go before you in battle.

A side benefit of a life of praise is the positive attitude it develops in you. You'll be quicker to laugh and show affection. And studies have shown that such positive living can be good for your health.

For example, researchers at the University of Maryland found that laughing patients were healthier patients: specifically, they were less likely to have heart problems. They interviewed 300 patients, asking them questions to measure how they responded to typical day-to-day situations. The patients who tended to respond with laughter were better off. The patients with heart problems were 40 percent *less likely* to respond with laughter.

The researchers found that laughter releases chemicals into the bloodstream that relax the blood vessels, and that hearty laughter reduces blood pressure and heart rate. It seems the old axiom "**Laughter is the best medicine**" is true after all. The Bible agrees:

"A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones"

Proverbs 17:22.

Another study found that a little marital affection each morning might be the best thing you can do for your health. This study was done by a group of German psychologists, doctors, and insurance companies. Their purpose was to find the secret of long life. The secret? Kiss your spouse each morning before you leave for work! German men who kissed their wives each morning had fewer car accidents on their way to work, missed less work due to sickness, earned 20 to 30 percent more money, and lived five years longer than the non-kissers.

How can a little kiss have such a big impact? **Dr. Arthur Szabo** put it this way: "A husband who kisses his wife every morning begins the day with a positive attitude."

Don't underestimate the importance of a positive attitude. And it's one of the side benefits of a life of praise. Praise is good for us all around, spiritually and physically. Need some help getting started? Try this. In the lines below, write a love letter to God. After all, he wrote one to you (the Bible). I've provided a few phrases to stir your creative juices.

"Dear God,

"I love you because.....

"You're the only One who can.....

"I need you in my life because.....

Love, "