

SEVEN HEBREW WORDS FOR PRAISE

1. **HALLAL** is a primary Hebrew root word for praise. Our word "hallelujah" comes from this base word. It means "to be clear, to praise, to shine, to boast, show, to rave, celebrate, to be clamorously foolish."

Psalm 113:1-3 *Praise (hallal) ye the Lord, praise (hallal) o ye servants of the Lord, praise (hallal) the name of the Lord.*

Psalm 150:1 *Praise (hallal) the Lord! Praise (hallal) God in His sanctuary; Praise (hallal) Him in His mighty expanse.*

Psalm 149:3 *Let them praise (hallal) His name in the dance: let them sing praises with the timbrel and harp.*

OTHER REFERENCES: Judges 16:24; 2 Samuel 14:25; 2 Chronicles 7:6; Ezra 3:10-11; Nehemiah 5:13; Psalms 18:3, 56:4, 63:5, 150:2-4; Isaiah 62:9; Jeremiah 20:13; Joel 2:26

2. **YADAH** is a verb with a root meaning, "the extended hand, to throw out the hand, therefore to worship with extended hand, to lift the hands." According to the Lexicon, the opposite meaning is "to bemoan, the wringing of the hands."

2 Chronicles 20:21 *Give thanks (yadah) to the Lord, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.*

Psalm 63:1 *So I will bless thee as long as I live; I will (yadah) lift up my hands in Thy name.*

Psalm 107:15 *Oh that men would praise (yadah) the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.*

OTHER REFERENCES: Genesis 29:35, 49:8; 2 Chronicles 7:3,6; Psalms 67:3, 108:3; Isaiah 12:1,4; Jeremiah 33:11

3. **TOWDAH** comes from the same principle root word as yadah, but is used more specifically. Towdah literally means, "an extension of the hand in adoration, avowal, or acceptance." By way of application, it is apparent in the Psalms and elsewhere that it is used for thanking God for "things not yet received" as well as things already at hand.

Psalm 50:14 *Offer unto God praise (towdah) and pay thy vows unto the Most High.*

Psalm 50:23 *Whoso offereth praise (towdah) glorifieth Me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*

OTHER REFERENCES: Psalms 42:4, 56:12; Jeremiah 17:26; Jeremiah 33:11

4. **SHABACH** means, "to shout, to address in a loud tone, to command, to triumph."

Psalm 47:1 O clap your hands, all peoples; shout (shabach) to God with the voice of joy (or triumph).

Psalm 145:4 One generation shall praise (shabach) Thy works to another and declare Thy mighty acts.

Isaiah 12:6 Cry aloud and shout (shabach) for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

OTHER REFERENCES: Psalms 63:3, 117:1, 145:4; Ecclesiastes 4:2

5. **BARAK** means "to kneel down, to bless God as an act of adoration, to salute."

Psalm 95:6 O come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel (barak) before the Lord our maker.

1Chronicles 29:20 Then David said to all the assembly, "Now bless (barak) the Lord your God." And all the assembly blessed (barak) the Lord, the God of their fathers, and bowed low and did homage to the Lord and to the king.

Psalm 34:1 I will bless (barak) the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

OTHER REFERENCES: Judges 5:2; Psalms 72:15, 96:2, 103:1-2

6. **ZAMAR** means "to pluck the strings of an instrument, to sing, to praise; a musical word which is largely involved with joyful expressions of music with musical instruments."

Psalm 21:13 Be exalted O Lord, in Thine own strength, so will we sing and praise (zamar) Thy power.

1Chronicles 16:9 Sing to Him, sing praises (zamar) to Him; speak of all His wonders.

Psalm 57:8-9 Awake my glory; awake harp and lyre, I will awaken the dawn! I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord among the peoples; I will sing praises (zamar) to Thee among the nations.

OTHER REFERENCES: Judges 5:3; 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalms 61:8, 147:1, 7

7. **TEHILLAH** is derived from the word halal and means "the singing of halals, to sing or to laud; perceived to involve music, especially singing; hymns of the Spirit or praise."

Psalm 22:3 Yet Thou art holy, O Thou who art enthroned upon the praises (tehillah) of Israel.

Isaiah 61:3 To grant to those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise (tehillah) instead of the spirit of fainting, So they shall be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

OTHER REFERENCES: Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 10:21; Nehemiah 9:5; Psalms 9:14, 22:25; Jeremiah 48:2