

A Common Hallelujah

The word "hallelujah" is pronounced almost the same exact way in languages such as Slovakian, Italian, Spanish, Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, French, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Khmer, Russian, Swedish, Welsh, and Swahili. I first noticed this while I was in Cambodia. During worship, they were singing in Khmer with English words projected on the screen for us Americans. At one particular point in the song, both the English and Khmer lined up perfectly for us to communally sing, "hallelujah."

The word has its roots in the ancient languages of the biblical text, and is a transliteration of "praise Yahweh." The phrase gets condensed into one word and is then pronounced "Hallelujah." It is merely a reverent way for the soul to remember God's worthiness to be praised. Exclamations of hallelujah come only when one recognizes the Almighty's power, and can be seen in the book of Revelation.

In Revelation 19, "hallelujah" is used four times. Each of them are aimed directly at God for His salvation, glory, power, and reign. In both, the heavenly realm and the earthly realm, God's creation can't help but praise Him for who He is, what He does, and how He does it. Not only does the word "hallelujah" exceed the border of countries and languages, but it even goes beyond the physical realm, on into the spiritual world.

This simple fact has triggered a number of thoughts in my mind, but there is one that stands out more than the rest. Am I living a life of Hallelujah? Because no matter where I go in the world, people can understand it. Hallelujah has become the universal way of praising God in almost any part of the globe. Therefore, my intentionality in praising God should not just be seen in Sunday worship, but everywhere I go. "Hallelujah" is an opportunity to reach a commonality between man and spirit.

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