



UNDERSTANDING WHAT I BELIEVE



I feel uncomfortable when people shout, “Hallelujah!” What does *hallelujah* mean?

REVELATION 19:6–7, 1031

H*allelujah* is derived from two Hebrew words meaning, “praise the Lord.”

The actual word *hallelujah* appears four times in the New Testament (Revelation 19:1 – 6, 1031). The phrase “Praise the Lord” appears throughout the whole Bible, though mostly in the Psalms.

When you feel uncomfortable while people shout, “Hallelujah!” ask yourself, “Why do I feel uncomfortable?”

Now that you know what *hallelujah* means, you might ask yourself why you are not moved to “praise the Lord” yourself. Maybe you take life for granted, rather than feeling grateful to God for life. Perhaps you’re not satisfied with what God has provided — you’ve got clothes and shoes on, but they’re not the ones you’d prefer. You’ve eaten recently, but you didn’t get what you really wanted. Worship, praise is personal and maybe you do not have a single reason to praise God. Not!

You may not have a specific reason at the moment for *not* praising the Lord, but keep thinking about it. While others are shouting, “Hallelujah!” keep thinking about why you are uncomfortable, why you do not praise God with them. Perhaps it’s because it’s *them!* — maybe if they weren’t so old, so corny, and maybe if they didn’t shout “hallelujah” all the time. . .

When you realize you have much to praise about, but feel uncomfortable with outward expression, talk to God in your thoughts. Focus on Christ. Each person praises in their own way, so praise God quietly, reverently. Sing the words of the songs. Pray. Talk to God. Tell your Lord how you feel, express your love for God.

Those hallelujah times that make you uncomfortable are the moments to confess your sins.

When others are shouting “Hallelujah!” all around you, you can even admit to the Almighty that you are angry: “God, I’m really mad at you.”

You can tell the Lord God how disappointed you are about something you expected that did not happen the way you wanted.

Respect rather than ridicule those who *are* shouting hallelujahs. Realize that they have something to praise God about, and take their hallelujah moments as your own to sincerely relate to God, quietly in your own way.

But be careful, one day you might, before you know it, say quietly under your breath, “Hallelujah.”

A HALLELUJAH MOMENT IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Barack Hussein Obama, a man of African descent, a black man, was elected the 44th President of the United States of America. He was elected by an overwhelming majority of the American people regardless of race or ethnic background.

Excitement over Barack Obama was not just in America. People everywhere were inspired by the hope that he wrote about and proclaimed in his speeches.

The whole world watched amazed as he organized and ran a campaign that encouraged people to hope. Even when the opposition tried to discredit him, he stood strong on his message of hope.

When the elections results came in, it was something many older African Americans did not think they would live to see. His election confirmed that the sacrifices men and women made in the quest for equality and civil rights were not in vain. His election and inauguration was an answer to prayers and something to shout about. It was a hallelujah moment!