



10 Hebrew Words for Praise

1. Yadah – To revere, give thanks, praise

Literally, this word means to extend or throw the hand. And it's used elsewhere in the OT to refer to one casting stones or pulling back the bow. In an attempt to revere, in an attempt to give thanks, the human response to God is to extend your hands, to reach out in response to God.

- Psalm 145:10 - "All your works shall **give thanks** to you, O Lord, and all Your saints shall bless You!" All creation reaches out in thanks and praise back toward the creator.
- Psalm 139:14 - "**I praise** you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." I praise you, I extend my hands to you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made by you.
- Psalm 97:12 - "Rejoice in the Lord O you righteous, and **give thanks** to His holy name!"

Yada means to give thanks, to revere, to praise by a physical throwing of the hands.

2. Barach – To bless, to praise as a blessing

Literally, this word means to bow or to kneel. It's what a person does when they come into the presence of a King. It's an expression of humility.

- Psalm 145:1 - "I will extol you, my God my King, and **bless** Your name forever and ever." Verse 2- same thing- "Every day I will **bless** you (barach) and praise Your name forever."
- Psalm 95:6 - "Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us **kneel** before the Lord our Maker!" In this verse the psalmist uses 3 different words- "Come let us worship (literally shachah- bow down prostrate) and bow down (kara – crouch low), let us kneel (barach)- 3 different words that all mean some form of bowing down, crouching down, kneeling before... blessing in honor before.

3. Shabach - To exclaim or shout praise

It's a way for a person to express confidence in God's character and ability.

- Psalm 145:4 - "One generation shall **commend** your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."
- Psalm 63:3 - "Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will **praise** you." My lips will "shabach" you.

4. Hallal – To shine, rave, boast, celebrate extravagantly, to be clamorously foolish.

Hallal is the root from which we get the word Hallelujah. Hallel- praise- jah... YHWH.

- Psalm 145:3 - "Great is the Lord and greatly to be **praised**, and His greatness is unsearchable. He is the one most worthy of this.
- Psalm 69:30 - "I will **praise** the name of God with a song; I will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This will please the Lord more than an ox or a bull with horns and hoofs. What pleases God? What does God desire? More than sacrificial animals is the hallal of His people.
- Psalm 150- the end of the book of Psalms- the end of the book of praise ends with what? With pure, unadulterated praise. It's ends with hallal.

Psalm 150:1-6

¹ **Praise** the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens!

- 2 **Praise** him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his excellent greatness!
- 3 **Praise** him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
- 4 **Praise** him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
- 5 **Praise** him with sounding cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
- 6 Let everything that has breath **praise** the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

To shine, rave, boast, grab instruments, noise makers. These Jews knew how to create a culture of joy and wonder and borderline foolishness in response to the wonder and majesty of God.

- The psalmist in Psalm 119:164 says – “Seven times a day I will **praise** (hallal) you for your righteous rules.”

5. Zamar – To make music

Zamar means literally to pluck the strings- to praise by plucking.

- Psalm 7:17 – “I will give to the Lord the thank due to His righteousness, and I will **sing praise** (zamar, make music) to the name of the Lord, the Most High.”
- Psalm 9:2 – “I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.”

6. Todah – Confession, praise, thanksgiving

It’s another word of confession, praise and thanksgiving. But when you look at verses like Psalm 50:14 and 23 – both which use this word, it implies and emphasizes a sacrifice... but not just any sacrifice- a sacrifice before the deliverance happens.

- Psalm 50:14 – “Offer to God a sacrifice of **thanksgiving** and perform your vows to the Most High, and call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”

7. Tehillah- A song or a hymn of praise

Note this- it is often unrehearsed or unscripted or personally written to respond to God.

- Psalm 145 superscript, “A song of **praise**. Of David.” It’s literally, a Tehillah of David.
- Psalm 33:1 – “Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous. **Praise** befits the upright.”
- Psalm 22:3 – “Yet You are holy, enthroned on the **praises** of Israel.”

8. Rum – To extol, exalt, display, lift high

- Psalm 145:1 – “I will **extol** you, my God and King.”

9. Taqa – To clap, applaud

- Psalm 47:1 – “**Clap** your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!”

10. Machol – A dance

- Psalm 149:3 – “Let them praise his name with **dancing**, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.”
- Psalm 30:11 – “You have turned for me my mourning into **dancing**; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.”