

Psalm 113:1-9
Praise Our Incomparable Sovereign God

Introduction: This is the first of the six Hallel psalms (113-118). They were part of the celebrations/feasts at Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, New Moon, and Hannukah. At Passover, Psalms 113-114 were sung before the meal, while 115-118 were sung after the meal. The psalm reminds us of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1-10) and Mary (Luke 1:46-55).

1) I should praise Yahweh OBEDIENTLY—113:1 (3-fold command)

- Addressed to the community, plural imperatives
- a) ¹ *Praise the LORD!* [*Hallelu-Yah*]
 - i) From the root *halal*, meaning to express the greatness or excellence of someone, with a focus on the resulting confidence one has in that person.
 - ii) This is neither insincere flattery or ignorant guesswork. (D. Kidner)
- b) *Praise* [*Hallelu*], *O servants* (worshippers in general) of the LORD,
- c) *praise* [*Hallelu*] *the* (revealed) *name of the LORD!*

2) I should praise Yahweh EXTENSIVELY—113:2-3

- God's name is to be blessed and praised (passive verbs, something done to the name)
- a) We should bless Yahweh **all the time**—113:2
 - i) ² *Blessed* [*barak*] *be the* (revealed) *name of the LORD from this time forth and forevermore!*
 - ii) "Name" refers to all of God's nature (who and what He is) and His reputation.
 - iii) There is never a time when praising God is not appropriate.
- b) We should praise Yahweh **everywhere** —113:3
 - i) ³ *From the rising of the sun to its setting, the* (revealed) *name of the LORD is to be praised* [*halal*]!
 - ii) There is never a place where praising God is not appropriate.

3) I should praise Yahweh INTELLIGENTLY—113:4-9b

- a) He is **infinitely transcendent** (high, but not aloof) to inspire awe—113:4-6
 - i) He is infinitely infinite—113:4
 - (1) In authority—⁴ *The LORD is high* [*rum*] *above all nations,*
 - (2) In honor and splendor—*and his glory* [*kavod*] *above the heavens!*
 - (a) "Glory" means all the supernatural manifestations of his presence. (Allen Ross)
 - (b) His glory is the highest of all realities. (Alec Motyer)
 - ii) He is incomparable (rhetorical question)—113:5-6 ⁵ *Who is like the LORD our God,* (cf. Isaiah 40:18, 25; 46:5)
 - (1) In authority—*who is seated* [*yashab*] (enthroned) *on high,*
 - (2) In grace—⁶ *who looks far down on the heavens and the earth?*

- b) He **graciously condescends** (intimately nigh) to accomplish just reversals for the alienated and vulnerable—113:7-9
- We do NOT live in a closed universe.
 - i) The destitute, humiliated, helpless individual:
 - (1) What does God do?—113:7
 - (a) ⁷ *He raises [qum] the poor from the dust* (from which Adam was made; Gen. 2:7)
 - (b) *and lifts [rum] the needy from the ash heap,*
 - (2) What does God accomplish by doing the things in v. 7?—113:8
 - (a) ⁸ *to make them sit [yashab] with princes, with the princes of his people.*
 - (3) Cf. nearly identical to Hannah in 1 Sam. 2:8.
 - (4) Scripture does not tell us that this is always accomplished quickly.
 - ii) The frustrated, humiliated, helpless individual:
 - (1) What does God do?
 - (a) ⁹ *He gives [yashab] the barren woman a home,*
 - (b) *making her the joyous mother of children.*
 - (2) Examples throughout Biblical history include Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Samson's mother, and Hannah.
 - (3) This is not a promise that He will give all barren women a child. However, it emphasizes His compassion and ability to do so if it is consistent with His will.

4) I should praise Yahweh DELIBERATELY—113:9c

- a) *Praise the **LORD!** [Hallelu-Yah]*

5) Things to remember:

- a) Whenever I have the opportunity and wherever I am, I can praise the Lord.
- b) God's people should be quicker to praise Him.