

SBC – July 19, 2026

Psalm 113:1-9

“Praise the LORD”

We don't know who wrote Psalm 113.

Psalm 113 is the beginning of six Psalms (Psalm 113-118) that are known as “The Hallel Psalms.” The word “Hallel” means praise and is short for “Hallelujah.” These “Hallel Psalms” were sung at the Jewish festivals (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles), but especially at Passover.

For this reason, this cluster of Psalms became known as “The Egyptian Hallel”, especially based on Psalm 114 which emphasizes God's deliverance of His people from Egypt. Normally two of these Psalms (Ps. 113-114) were sung before the meal, and the rest (Ps. 115-118) after the meal.

It is most probable that it is from these Hallel Psalms that Jesus and His disciples sang on the night He was betrayed (cf. Mt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26).

Slide # 1

Matthew 26:30 (NKJV)

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Slide # 2

Psalm 113

“Praise the LORD”

vv. 1-3 The Call to Praise

vv. 4-5 – The Greatness of God

vv. 6-9 – The Grace of God

The first five verses present God as the One who is infinitely high, the last four as the One who is intimately nigh. – ***William MacDonald***

Psalm 113 (NKJV)

1 Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD!

“Praise the LORD” in the Hebrew is the one word “Hallelujah.” More literally, it is “Praise YHWH!” It is the climactic praise word. There are actually 7 Hebrew words translated as “praise”. Again, in this text it is “Hallelujah.”

It means to joyfully or boastfully celebrate the LORD for Who He is as the faithful God of Israel. To praise the LORD is to exalt Him and make Him look good for the great God that He is.

God’s name YHWH is forever attached to His covenant relationship with Israel. God is forever known as the covenant-God of Israel.

Slide # 3

Deuteronomy 28:10 (NKJV)

10 Then all peoples of the earth shall see that **you are called by the name of the LORD**, and they shall be afraid of you.

Note the threefold call to praise the LORD in verse one. In the Bible, when something is stated three times, it is stated in the superlative. The calling of the believer is to actively praise the LORD. It is an obligation. It is what we should constantly be doing. This is emphasized specifically in regard to the “servants of the LORD.”

The verse concludes with, “Praise the name of the LORD!” The name of the LORD stands for WHO He is – it denotes everything about Him! It denotes the very character of God in all of His attributes. His Name is the essence of Who He is. To praise His Name is to worshipfully exalt Him for Who He is.

2 Blessed be the name of the LORD From this time forth and forevermore!

God is forever God, and He is therefore to be continually praised forever for Who He is. He never changes. He is worthy of praise. Therefore, He is to be praised forever! As God’s servants, we are to be continually occupied with His praise.

The unchanging God never becomes unworthy of our praise. For the child of God with open eyes, time only reveals more reasons to praise Him. – **David Guzik**

3 From the rising of the sun to its going down The LORD's name is to be praised.

Using the Hebrew poetry pattern of repetition, the psalmist re-emphasized the idea that God is worthy of continual praise.

Note the word "name" is used 3 times in the first three verses, emphasizing the praise due to God for WHO He is – His character, His very being.

Slide # 4

- v. 1 Praise the **name** of the LORD!
- v. 2 Blessed by the **name** of the LORD...
- v. 3 The Lord's **name** is to be praised.

In verses 1-3, the emphasis is strongly made that the LORD is to be praised and He is to be praised continually!

Now in the remainder of the chapter, the writer emphasizes two primary reasons. 1) In verses 4-5 He is to be praised for His sovereign greatness, and 2) in verses 6-9 He is to be praised for His gracious dealings with His people.

4 The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens.

The LORD is not just the God over Israel! No! He is the LORD high above all nations. He is sovereign over all the nations. The pagans had supposed local gods, but YHWH is God over all the nations.

His glory is above the heavens. His greatness cannot be measured or apprehended. Yes, the "heavens declare the glory of God," but that is not the full story (cf. Ps. 19:1). His glory extends way above the heavens beyond what we can ever begin to comprehend. The universe itself cannot contain or define Him.

Slide # 5

1 Kings 8:27 (NKJV)

27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? **Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You.** How much less this temple which I have built!

The focus here is on God's absolute sovereignty over all! He is above all nations – He is above the heavens. He is above all – He is the Most High God!

5 Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high,

God is so great, so high, that He is incomparable! Nothing exists that can even compare to Him and His greatness.

Slide # 6

Exodus 15:11 (NKJV)

11 "Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Isaiah 40:18 (NKJV)

18 To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him?

Isaiah 40:25 (NKJV)

25 "To whom then will you liken Me, Or to whom shall I be equal?" says the Holy One.

Slide # 7

God is Worthy to Be Praised

By whom? – By all His servants (v. 1)

How? – By blessing His name (vv. 1-3)

When? – Forevermore! (v. 2)

Where? – Everywhere – from the rising of the sun to its going down. (v. 3)

For What? – His greatness (vv. 4-5)

- His grace (vv. 6-9)

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6 Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in the heavens and in the earth?

What an amazing reality! Not only is God transcendently great and incomparable, but He also humbles Himself to involve Himself with things in the heavens and beyond, even things on earth!

Most kings in ancient times were inaccessible to their people. They did not really care about the common person or what they were going through. But God, as GREAT as He is, takes the initiative to humble Himself and involve Himself in our lives.

When we understand the greatness of God, His interest and care for creation (especially mankind) is remarkable. – **David Guzik**

“What amazes the psalmist is that God is exalted so high that he has to stoop low to see not only the earth but also the heavens, and yet at the same time he cares for the lowly.” – **James Montgomery Boice**

There is no greater example of God humbling Himself and involving Himself in the care of mankind than in sending His Son Jesus.

Slide # 8

Philippians 2:5–8 (LSB)

5 Have this way of thinking in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

6 who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be **grasped**, [*to be held onto*]

7 but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men.

8 Being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

7 He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap,

God exalts the humble (Prov. 3:34; James 4:6; Isa. 57:15).

You can't get lower than the dust. You can't get more needy than existing on the ash heap.

The poor hover near the refuse **heap** outside the city for warmth from the perpetual burning and for food from the garbage.

– ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

The poor from the dust and the needy from the ash heap denote the most destitute of circumstances. It is there that God can be found helping His people!

Slide # 9**Nahum 1:7 (NKJV)**

7 The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.

The Lord, in His grace, not only sees us but cares for us and helps us. He humbles Himself and condescends to work on our behalf (138:6-8). – **Warren Wiersbe**

8 That He may seat him with princes— With the princes of His people.

God takes those in the lowest of positions and exalts them to a high place where they sit with princes. God can do this!

The language of verses 7-8 parallels parts of Hannah's song in 1 Samuel 2:1-10, part of which was then borrowed by Mary in Luke 1:46-55.

Slide # 10**1 Samuel 2:8 (NKJV)**

8 He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the beggar from the ash heap, To set them among princes And make them inherit the throne of glory. "For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, And He has set the world upon them.

9 He grants the barren woman a home, Like a joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD!

In Bible times, motherhood was a desired honor. Barrenness was considered a tragedy (cf. Gen. 21:2; 25:21; 30:1, 23; 1 Sam. 1:6-7, 10). To the Jews, being able to have children was a mark of God's gracious blessing.

To be delivered from the "curse" of barrenness was cause for extravagant joy.

But God cares about people individually, and He is able to bring about significance and fruitfulness to the barren.

Israel's entire history is built around the fact that God granted barren women to bear children, including Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah.

Sarah (Gen. 21:1), Rebekah (Gen. 25:21), and Rachel (Gen. 30:23) would be the most significant since the outcome of the Abrahamic Covenant depended on these childless women being blessed by God to be mothers. – **John MacArthur**

God is to be praised. He is to be praised continually. And there are two great reasons brought out in Psalm 113.

First, God is to be praised because of His sovereign, incomparable greatness. God is awesome like no other! We stand in worshipful awe of Him!

*Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom power and love
Our God is an awesome God*

I think when we see God face to face in all His glory, we will say that profound worshipful word “WOW!” Or to be more spiritual, “GLORY” as it says in Psalm 29:9, “In His temple everyone says, ‘Glory.’” Or even more probably we will lay at His feet like a dead man as did John in Revelation 1 – until He in tender love raises us up.

Second, God is to be praised for His amazing grace that exalts the destitute, the helpless, and the hopeless.

We often quote Isaiah 55:8-9...

Slide # 11

Isaiah 55:8–9 (NKJV)

8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.

9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

There is lots of application to this, but there is a very specific context in view here related to the grace of God.

Slide # 12

Isaiah 55:1-11

- 1) The offer of GRACE - vv. 1-5
- 2) The call to REPENTANCE – vv. 6-7
- 3) **The incomprehensible ways of God – vv. 8-9**
- 4) The effectiveness of GOD'S WORD vv. 10-11

GRACE is the driving thought here. GRACE is such a foreign concept that it never enters the human mind that God's WHOLE plan of salvation is based on a pure GRACE system. Grace is a foreign concept to natural thinking.

So unique is this GRACE gospel that no other religious system in the world holds to a GRACE message. All other religions in the world are works-oriented – works for salvation oriented. Our message is that Jesus did it all! He died saying, "It is finished!" He humbled Himself to that point for us! That is GRACE. "Jesus paid it all – all to Him we owe. That is GRACE.

During a British conference on comparative religions, experts from around the world debated what, if any, belief was unique to the Christian faith. They began eliminating possibilities. Incarnation? Other religions had different versions of gods' appearing in human form. Resurrection? Again, other religions had accounts of return from death. The debate went on for some time until C. S. Lewis wandered into the room. "What's the rumpus about?" he asked, and heard in reply that his colleagues were discussing Christianity's unique contribution among world religions. Lewis responded, "Oh, that's easy. ***It's grace.***"

For this God is to be praised and He will be throughout eternity!

Our God is an awesome God in wisdom, power, and love! He is worthy of our praise!

By way of application:

We were poor, but through faith in Christ, God by grace has brought out of the ash heap of sin and seated us with Christ in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). Our experience was the barrenness of sin, but now in Christ we know the joy of significance, purpose, and fruitfulness.

We can never praise God enough for all He has done for us, and for all that He will do for us!

Psalm 113 begins with Hallelujah (Praise the LORD) and ends with Hallelujah (Praise the LORD).

From the rising of the sun to its going down, the name of the LORD is to be praised.

The name of the LORD is to be praised forevermore!

Praise the LORD for His sovereign greatness!

Praise the LORD for His amazing grace!

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!