

**Psalm 135 NKJV**

Praise the Lord! Praise the Creator and the Redeemer!  
The author is unknown.

**Psalm 135** has been called “a mosaic” because it contains numerous quotations from other parts of the Scripture.

**Psalm 135:** A classic example of the hymn of praise, this psalm contains the three key elements: *a call to praise* (verses 1-3), *a cause for praise* (verses 4-18), and a *conclusion to praise* (verses 19-21).

**1 Praise the Lord!** Praise the name of the Lord; Praise Him, O you servants of the Lord!

**2** You who stand in the house of the Lord, In the courts of the house of our God,

**3** Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; Sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant.

**4** For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.

**5** For I know that the Lord is great, and our Lord is above all gods.

**6** Whatever the Lord pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.

**7** He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasuries.

**8** He destroyed the firstborn of Egypt, Both of man and beast.

**9** He sent signs and wonders into the midst of you, O Egypt, Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.

**10** He defeated many nations and slew mighty kings—

**11** Sihon king of the Amorites, Og king of Bashan, And all the kingdoms of Canaan—

**12** And gave their land as a heritage, A heritage to Israel His people.

**13** Your name, O Lord, endures forever, Your fame, O Lord, throughout all generations.

**14** For the Lord will judge His people, And He will have compassion on His servants.

**15** The idols of the nations are silver and gold, The work of men’s hands.

**16** They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see;

**17** They have ears, but they do not hear; Nor is there any breath in their mouths.

**18** Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.

**19** Bless the Lord, O house of Israel! Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron!

**20** Bless the Lord, O house of Levi! You who fear the Lord, bless the Lord!

**21** Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, who dwells in Jerusalem!

## **Praise the Lord!**

### **A. A Call to Praise!**

Verses 1-3

**Verse 1** - Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord; Praise Him, O you servants of the Lord!

**Praise the LORD:** Psalm 135, verses **1** and **21** begins and ends with this phrase. It is a call for stirring passionate praise to God. This psalm gives many reasonable, logical reasons why we should praise the LORD.

**Praise the name of the LORD:** To praise the name of the LORD is to honor Him in all His character and attributes. Praise Him for His greatness, goodness, grace, mercy, holiness, justice, power, truth, and faithfulness.

**Praise Him, O you servants of the LORD:** As in the previous psalm (Psalm 134:1), this refers to the priests and Levites who would stand in the house of the LORD for priestly and temple duties.

### **1 Chronicles 9:33 New Living Translation**

“The musicians, all prominent Levites, lived at the Temple. They were exempt from other responsibilities since they were on duty at all hours”.

### **1 Peter 2:9 New International Version**

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light”.

**Summary of Verse 1** - The *first praise* is telling us what to do, praise. The *second praise* is telling us who to praise, the Lord. The *third praise* is saying who is to do the praising, servants of the Lord.

**Verse 2** - You who stand in the house of the Lord, In the courts of the house of our God,

**Stand in the house of the Lord:** You that are established (stand), in the Lord. It seems not to matter whether you are the minister, or those in the outer court, or the congregation.

**In the courts of the house of our God:** This may speak of the people of Israel in general, who as worshippers had no access to the house of the LORD (only priests could enter the holy place). The common man could stand in the courts of the house of our God. Alluding to the courts in the temple, the court of the priests, where they stood and ministered, slaying, and offering their sacrifices. And the great court, where all the Israelites stood and worshipped (2 Chron. 4:9). So, this may describe the worshippers of God in common, who should praise him: and happy are they that have a place here (see Psalm 84:1-4). This was a call to all God's people to praise Him.

**Verse 3 - Praise** the Lord, for the Lord is good; Sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant.

**For the LORD is good:** In listing reasons why Yahweh should be praised, the psalmist began with the simple declaration of God's goodness.

**Sing praises to His name:** One of the ways praises is shown is in song. God's people should be a singing people.

**For it is pleasant:** This is the second reason given to praise Yahweh – because it benefits the one who praises Him. Worship does do us good, and there is nothing wrong with enjoying the fact that it is pleasant.

### **Psalm 147:1 The Message**

Hallelujah! It's a good thing to sing praise to our God; praise is beautiful, praise is fitting.

### **Psalm 147:1 New Living Translation**

Praise the Lord! How good to sing praises to our God! How delightful and how fitting!

When you run out of words to praise Him with, just burst out into song and praise Him with that. Let it be a sweet, sweet, sound in His ear.

### **B. A Cause for Praise!**

Verses 4-18

**Verse 4** - For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.

**For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself:** The psalmist listed a third reason to praise God – His choosing of Israel for His special treasure. He did not choose Israel because they were great, but because He is great in love.

God told Israel this in Deuteronomy 7:7-8: The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers.

**His special treasure:** This fulfills the declaration of God in Deuteronomy 7:6: For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

Israel was called to praise God because He chose them; this is also a reason for the New Covenant believer. “Shall not we Christians, then, praise the same gracious Lord, who hath chosen us out of the world, who hath given unto us his gospel, who dwelleth in us by his Spirit, and who, by that Spirit, maketh us more than conquerors over our spiritual adversaries?” (Horne)

**Verse 5** - For I know that the Lord is great, and our Lord is above all gods.

**I know that the LORD is great, and our Lord is above all gods:** Here is another reason to praise God. In declaring the greatness of God, the singer used two great titles or names for God. Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel (the LORD) is great, and Adonai, the Master of all (Lord) is above all gods. God is exalted above all the pretended deities of the pagans.

This was proved over and over. Elijah proved to the people and the prophets of Baal on mount Carmel that our God is God. God showed Himself over and over, in the 10 plagues of Egypt, when He defamed the gods of Egypt.

**Psalm 97:9 New Living Translation**

For you, O Lord, are supreme over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

**Verse 6** - Whatever the Lord pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.

**Whatever the LORD pleases He does:** The psalmist exalted Yahweh as having ultimate power, with the ability to do whatever He desires. His power extends everywhere, in heaven and on earth, and in the seas and from the ends of the earth.

God is an absolute sovereign. He has formed a plan and has carried it out. He has made the world as he chose, and He has ordered all its arrangements according to His own pleasure. As a universal sovereign, He has a right to universal adoration.

### **Psalm 115:3 New Living Translation**

Our God is in the heavens, and he does as he wishes.

### **Colossians 1:16-17 New Living Translation**

**16** for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.

**17** He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

**Verse 7** - He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasures.

**Vapors to ascend:** Refers to the water cycle of earthly evaporation and condensation in the clouds.

Every element in the universe is under His control. He made it all for a purpose. It rains when He tells it to rain, and it stops when He tells it to stop. He is supreme Ruler of the universe.

**He makes lightning for the rain:** This exalts Yahweh over the Canaanite idol Baal, who was thought of as the god of weather. Baal was sometimes depicted as holding a bolt of lightning and was believed to be the one who sent the rain. The singer rebuked this, and sang of Yahweh as the Lord over lightning, rain, and the wind.

### **Jeremiah 10:13 New Living Translation**

When he speaks in the thunder, the heavens roar with rain. He causes the clouds to rise over the earth. He sends the lightning with the rain and releases the wind from his storehouses.

**Psalm 8:3-4 New International Version**

3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars, which you have set in place,

4 what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

**Verse 8** - He destroyed the firstborn of Egypt, Both of man and beast.

**He destroyed the firstborn of Egypt:** Yahweh also exalted Himself over the supposed gods of the Egyptians. This psalm refers to the many plagues God inflicted on Egypt (He sent signs and wonders into the midst of you), with the greatest of them being the judgment of death on the firstborn of Egypt.

This was one of the great examples of separation of those who belong to God, and those who are of the world. The night that death visited Egypt and killed all the firstborn of the Egyptians, the Hebrews, who had the blood of the lamb on their door, were all spared. We as Christians are covered by the Blood for the Lamb, Jesus, who died for our sins.

**Verse 9** - He sent signs and wonders into the midst of you, O Egypt, Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.

**Upon Pharaoh and all his servants:** “God’s servants are far better off than Pharaoh’s servants: those who stand in the courts of Jehovah are delivered, but the courtiers (nobles) of Pharaoh are smitten all of them, for they were all partakers in his evil deeds.” (Spurgeon)

**Deuteronomy 6:22 New Living Translation**

The Lord did miraculous signs and wonders before our eyes, dealing terrifying blows against Egypt and Pharaoh and all his people.

**Psalm 136:10-15 New Living Translation**

**10** Give thanks to him who killed the firstborn of Egypt. His faithful love endures forever.

**11** He brought Israel out of Egypt. His faithful love endures forever.

**12** He acted with a strong hand and powerful arm. His faithful love endures forever.

**13** Give thanks to him who parted the Red Sea. His faithful love endures forever.

**14** He led Israel safely through, His faithful love endures forever.

**15** but he hurled Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea. His faithful love endures forever.

**Verses 10 and 11** - He defeated many nations and slew mighty kings—Sihon king of the Amorites, Og king of Bashan, And all the kingdoms of Canaan—

**He defeated many nations:** Once Israel was free from Egypt, Yahweh also showed His greatness over all supposed gods by defeating nations and mighty kings that attacked His people. Joshua 12:9-24 identifies 31 kings defeated.

Sihon, King of the Amorites, recounts Israel's defeat of Sihon (Numbers 21:21, 32).

Og, King of Bashan, recounts Israel's defeat of Og (Numbers 21:33-35).

Kingdoms of Canaan - Joshua chapters 6 to 12 recounts Joshua's conquest of the Land.

**Verse 12** - And gave their land as a heritage, A heritage to Israel His people.

**And gave their land as a heritage:** God demonstrated His greatness over all the gods of the Canaanites by defeating the kingdoms of Canaan and giving their land to Israel, as a heritage to them – something passed on from generation to generation.

As promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:18-21). This land of Canaan was to be the Promised Land. It became the land of the tribes of Israel. It was to be theirs forever as their heritage.

### **Genesis 15:18-21 New Living Translation**

**18** So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River—

**19** the land now occupied by the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites,

**20** Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites,

21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites.”

**Verse 13** - Your name, O Lord, endures forever, Your fame, O Lord, throughout all generations.

**Your name, O LORD, endures forever:** In light of Yahweh’s incomparable greatness (just declared in the previous verses), the singer praised His unchanging name and His never-ending fame.

The Lord himself endures forever, in his nature, being, and perfections. And the fame of Him, the fame of those acts of power and goodness before mentioned. The name of Christ endures forever. The fame of His wondrous works in nature, providence, and grace; and especially of His great work of redemption and salvation.

#### **Psalm 102:12 New Living Translation**

But you, O Lord, will sit on your throne forever. Your fame will endure to every generation.

#### **Exodus 3:15 New Living Translation**

God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations.

**Verse 14** - For the Lord will judge His people, And He will have compassion on His servants.

The verse begins by emphasizing that the LORD will judge His people. This doesn’t imply harsh judgment but rather a righteous evaluation or intervention on their behalf. When God judges, He ensures justice, rights wrongs, and sees to it that His people are treated fairly. Additionally, the verse assures us that God will also have compassion on His servants. His compassion is an expression of His deep love and care for His people.

For believers, this verse provides comfort and assurance: God is not indifferent to our struggles or injustices. He actively judges in our favor, ensuring that justice prevails. His compassion is ever-present, even when we face challenges or consequences. As we reflect on this verse, let’s trust in God’s righteous judgment and rest in His compassionate care for us.



**Verses 15-18:** These verses are like Psalm 115:4-8 and present a satire (sarcasm) against pagan idol worship. Postexilic Israel had seen enough of idolatry to hate it.

**Verse 15** - The idols of the nations are silver and gold, The work of men's hands.

**The idols of the nations are silver and gold:** This is a striking contrast to the greatness of the all-powerful God who reigns in heaven. The goodness and greatness of Yahweh make the puny idols, the work of men's hands, seem even emptier and more foolish.

This, with what follows, is observed, to show that when God judges his people, and takes vengeance on their enemies, the idols they serve will not be able to protect them and deliver them out of his hands. This prove that our Jehovah is great above all gods (Psalm 135:5). The matter of which they are made is at best gold and silver, which are the dust and metals of the earth.

**In the KJV version, *heathen* is used instead of *nations* in verse 15.** Heathens are those who have not accepted the Lord as their Savior. Idols mean nothings. They worship things made with hands that they can see with their physical eyes. Christianity is not believing in things we can see but is faith in the One we know in our heart exists. Things made with man's hands are the creation. We must worship the Creator and not His creations.

**Verse 16** - They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see;

**They have mouths, but they do not speak:** They cannot speak to their people, make covenants, give promises, guidance, or encouragement. Our God speaks to us!

**Eyes they have, but they do not see:** They offer their followers no protection or oversight. Our God's eyes are upon us (1 Peter 3:12) and we can trust Him.

**Verse 17** - They have ears, but they do not hear; Nor is there any breath in their mouths.

**They do not hear:** No matter how much the idolaters pray; their gods cannot hear them! Remember Elijah on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18). Our God's eyes are upon us, and His ears are open to our cries (Psalm 34:15).

**Nor is there any breath:** They are lifeless statues, they have no breath, no life in them. Our Jehovah, as the living God, is rightly opposed to them, who gives life, and breath, and all things, unto man. And yet what amazing stupidity is it, that any of them should worship such gods, who have not what they themselves have. They are nothing and have no powers at all.

**Verse 18** - Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.

Both are worthless and will know nothing of eternal life. The greatest tragedy is not what the idols cannot do but what they can do to the people who worship them. We become like the God we worship. As we worship the true and living God, He transforms our ears to hear His truth and the cries of those in need. He gives us eyes to see His Word and His world and the path He wants us to walk. Our “spiritual senses” develop, and we become more mature in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 5:10-14). But those who worship false gods lose the use of their spiritual senses and become blind to the light and deaf to God’s voice.

### **C. A Conclusion to Praise**

Verses 19-21

**Verse 19** - Bless the Lord, O house of Israel! Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron!

**Verse 20** - Bless the Lord, O house of Levi! You who fear the Lord, bless the Lord!

**Verse 21**- Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, who dwells in Jerusalem!  
Praise the Lord!

**Bless the LORD:** In a series of three statements, this psalm closes with a call to the descendants of Israel, Aaron, and Levi to honor God and give Him the recognition He deserves.

**You who fear the LORD, bless the LORD:** This may be a call to Gentiles who honored God to also join with Israel, the priests, and the Levites in praising and honoring Yahweh.

**Blessed be the LORD out of Zion:** Jerusalem was (and is) a special place to God, but His praise, His goodness, His greatness extends out of Zion. He is not a local deity; His power and greatness are not limited to Zion.

Facilitator: Stephanie Goldsmith  
Triumphant Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>  
Wisdom Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>

**Praise the LORD:** It is fitting for such a soaring psalm to end as it began – to declare God’s praise, and to call upon others to do so also.

**Praise the Lord!**

**Praise the name of the Lord!**

**Praise Him, O you servants of the Lord!**

**Let everything that has breath (us) Praise the Lord!**

**Resources:**

The Leadership Bible, NIV

Warren Wiersbe, Psalm 135

Biblegateway.com

Bible Study.org/Psalm 135

David Guzik, Psalm 135