

Psalm 135

"A Call to All Israel to Praise and Bless Yahweh, the Supreme God"

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A1 The Opening Call to Priests and Levites to Praise Yahweh for His Goodness and His Choice of Israel 135:1-4

B1 Opening Call to Praise 135:1a

C1 Praise Yahh's Person: Praise the LORD! ¹

C2 Praise Yahweh's Name: Praise the name of the LORD;

B2 The Identity of Those Called Upon to Praise 135:1b-2

C1 Servant of Yahweh: Praise *Him*, O servants of the LORD,² 135:1b

C2 Those Serving in the Temple 135:2

D1 {2} You who stand in the house of the LORD,

D2 In the courts of the house of our God!

B3 Reasons for Praise 135:3-4

C1 Yahweh's Goodness: {3} Praise the LORD,³ for the LORD is good;
135:3a

C2 Yahweh's Pleasing Name: Sing praises to His name, for it is lovely.
135:3b

¹ 135:1 - Praise the LORD: Heb., *Hallelu Yahh*, again in 135:3, and the last words of 135:21. The abbreviated name *Yahh* is found in 135:1, 3, 4, and 21. All the verbs in 135:1-3 are commands -- Piel (emphatic) imperatives.

² 135:1 - servants of the LORD: reminiscent of Ps. 134:1. Acknowledgments on this psalm's quotations from elsewhere in the OT go to Franz Delitzsch, *Psalms, Commentary on the Old Testament (K & D)*.

³ 135:3 - Praise the LORD: Heb., *Hallelu Yahh*!

C3 Yahweh's Choice of Israel 135:4

D1 {4} For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself,

D2 Israel for His own possession.⁴

**A2 PRAISE TO YAHWEH FOR HIS GREATNESS AND CONTROL OF NATURE
135:5-7**

B1 Yahweh's Greatness above All Gods 135:5

C1 Yahweh's Greatness: {5} For I know that the LORD is great ⁵

C2 Our Lord's Superiority: And that our Lord ⁶ is above all gods.⁷

**B2 Yahweh's Sovereign Activity from the Heights of Heaven to the Depths of
the Seas 135:6-7**

C1 Yahweh's Sovereign Activity: {6} Whatever the LORD pleases, He
does,⁸ 135:6a

C2 In the Heights of Heaven, Upon the Earth Itself, and in the Deepest Seas:
In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.⁹ 135:6b

⁴ 135:4 - possession: Perhaps borrowed from Deut. 7:6. From the very beginning of Yahweh's relationship with Israel, He chose her for Himself as His own unique nation. His purpose was that the nation of Israel would be a kingdom of priests, drawing the other nations of the world to Himself (Exod. 19:5-6). Sadly, Israel has often failed to do this. But the time is coming when, with the help of Yahweh, she will perform her function admirably. When Messiah returns, "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea" and "The nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples..." (Isa. 11:9, 10).

⁵ 135:5 - LORD ... great ... [above] all gods: Cf. Ps. 95:3; 96:4.

⁶ 135:5 - Lord: Not *Adonai* (136), a proper name of God, but *adown* (113), a title meaning "lord" or "master," from which *Adonai* is derived. *Adown* is frequently used of human lords or masters. For example, Sarah called Abraham "my lord" (Heb. *adowni*).

⁷ 135:5 - gods: *elohim* (430). This is normally the proper name of God meaning Strong One. Occurring as it typically does in the plural, here *elohim* means gods with a small g -- the false, so-called gods of the pagans of the world. There is only one true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The rest are mere pretenders, either idols, or powers of nature (like the sun or the moon) created by God, or demonic spirits (fallen angels originally created in holiness by God but who, deceived, followed Lucifer [Satan]).

⁸ 135:6 - Whatever [the LORD] pleases, He does: Cf. Ps. 115:3.

⁹ 135:6 - heaven, earth, seas: The three realms of existence in the cosmos (see Ex. 20:4) (Delitzsch, *K & D*).

C3 Examples of Yahweh's Greatness 135:7¹⁰

D1 The evaporation process: {7} He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth;

D2 Thunderstorms: Who makes lightnings for the rain,

D3 Wind: Who brings forth the wind from His treasuries.

A3 PRAISE TO YAHWEH FOR HIS SOVEREIGN ACTS ON BEHALF OF HIS PEOPLE 135:8-13

B1 His Sovereign Deliverance of Israel from Egypt 135:8-9

C1 The Terrible Tenth Plague - Death of the Firstborn 135:8

D1 {8} He smote the firstborn of Egypt,

D2 Both of man and beast.

C2 The Ten Plagues and the Defeat of the Egyptian Army in the Red Sea 135:9

D1 {9} He sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt,

D2 Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.

B2 His Sovereign Conquering of the Promised Land and Giving it to Israel 135:10-12

C1 His Destruction of Nations and Kings 135:10

D1 Nations: {10} He smote many nations

D2 Kings: And slew mighty kings,

C2 The Identification of Kings and Their Nations 135:11

D1 {11} Sihon, king of the Amorites,

D2 And Og, king of Bashan,

D3 And all the kingdoms of Canaan;

¹⁰ 135:7 - vapors, lightnings, wind: Evidently quoting Jer. 10:13 and 51:16.

C3 His Bequeathal of the Conquered Lands to Israel 135:12

D1 {12} And He gave their land as a heritage,

D2 A heritage to Israel His people.

B3 His Eternal, Sovereign Judgment of His People with Compassion 135:13-14

C1 Yahweh's Eternal Relationship (with Israel) Through His Name 135:13

D1 His eternal (covenant) name: {13} Your name, O LORD,¹¹ is everlasting,

D2 His Name to serve as a perpetual reminder of His covenant relationship with Israel: Your remembrance, O LORD, throughout all generations.¹²

C2 Yahweh's Adjudication of His Servant People with Compassion 135:14

D1 His adjudication: {14} For the LORD will judge¹³ His people

D2 His compassion: And will have compassion on His servants.¹⁴

¹¹ 135:13 - LORD: God's Covenant Name with Israel was especially revealed to Moses at the inception of His national relationship with Jacob's descendants, enslaved in Egypt. Yahweh, related to I AM, was to be His memorial name to all generations (Exod 3:13-15)!

¹² 135:13 - apparently borrowed from Ex. 3:15. Remembrance: Acc. to Ex. 3:13-15, Yahweh's name is an eternal memorial name to all generations of Israelis. His name signifies His eternal, sovereign relationship with Israel.

¹³ 135:14 - judge: Heb., *diyn* (1777), to act as an umpire, adjudicate. Yahweh's judgment is always in rectitude and equity (Ps 9:8). Here (135:14) His judgment is balanced by His ultimate compassion on His people!

¹⁴ 135:14 - apparently quoting Deut 32:36. Servants: Yahweh's purpose for Israel has always been that they would function as His servants. One of His desired tasks was for Israel to serve as a kingdom of priests, mediating between God and the nations of the world, drawing the nations to the God of Israel (Exod. 19:5-6). One day Israel will fulfill that purpose!

A4 THE WORTHLESSNESS OF THE IDOLS OF THE NATIONS 135:15-18¹⁵

B1 The Metallic Composition and Human Origin of the Idols 135:15

C1 Metallic Composition: {15} The idols of the nations are *but* silver and gold,

C2 Human Origin: The work of man's hands.

B2 The Inanimateness of the Idols 135:16-17

C1 Mute Mouths: {16} They have mouths, but they do not speak;

C2 Blind Eyes: They have eyes, but they do not see;

C3 Deaf Ears: {17} They have ears, but they do not hear,

C4 Lifeless Mouths: Nor is there any breath at all in their mouths.

B3 The Corresponding Lifeless Doom¹⁶ **of Idol Manufacturers and Worshipers 135:18**

C1 The Doom of Their Manufacturers: {18} Those who make them will be like them,

C2 The Doom of Their Worshipers: *Yes*, everyone who trusts in them.

¹⁵ 135:15-18 - description of idols: Borrowed largely from Ps 115:4-8.

¹⁶ 135:18 Title - Lifeless Doom: The point of the analogy is that idol makers and worshipers are as impotent as their lifeless idols. The idols are inanimate, and their human creators will one day become lifeless in death. This passage is not meant to be an exposition on resurrection, but merely a statement as to the helpless mortality of idol makers and worshipers. For OT statements with regard to resurrection, see Job 19:25-27; Psalm 16:10 cf. Acts 2:25-28 and 13:35-37; Ps. 49:15; 73:24; Isa. 26:19; 25:6-8 cf. Rev. 21:1-4; Ezek. 37:1-14; Dan. 12:2; Hos. 6:1-2; 13:14 cf. 1 Cor. 15:55.

A5 THE CONCLUDING CALL TO ISRAEL, PRIESTS, AND LEVITES TO BLESS AND PRAISE YAHWEH 135:19-21

B1 The Command to Different Constituents of Israel to Bless Yahweh 135:19-20

C1 House of Israel: {19} O house of Israel, bless ¹⁷ the LORD;

C2 House of Aaron: O house of Aaron, bless the LORD;

C3 House of Levi: {20} O house of Levi, bless the LORD;

C4 Ones Fearing Yahweh: You who revere ¹⁸ the LORD, bless the LORD.

B2 The Call for Blessing upon Yahweh from Zion / Jerusalem 135:21a

C1 The Origin of the Blessing upon Yahweh -- Worshipers in Zion: {21} Blessed be the LORD from Zion,¹⁹

C2 The Residence of the One Being Blessed -- Jerusalem: Who dwells in Jerusalem.

B3 The Final Command to Praise Yahweh: Praise the LORD! ²⁰ 135:21b

¹⁷ 135:19-20 - bless: All four commands to bless are emphatic (Piel) imperatives.

¹⁸ 135:20 - revere: A participle, lit., "the ones fearing" Yahweh. This would be a broader category than "House of Israel" in 135:19, for it could even include God-fearing Gentiles (people from the world's nations) who come to Jerusalem to worship.

¹⁹ 135:21 - Zion, Jerusalem: Today there is little blessing of Yahweh from Zion, and He no longer lives in Jerusalem. But this call will again come to fruition with the reestablishment of the great Millennial Temple in Jerusalem (Ezek. 40-46).

²⁰ 135:21 - Praise the LORD: Heb., *Hallelu Yahn!* This is an emphatic (Piel) imperative.

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 135

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