

Psalm 135

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

Scripture taken from the *NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE*®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.
Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

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

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

¹ Psalm 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 Psalm 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 Psalm 135:3 - Praise the LORD: Heb., *Hallelu Yahh*!

⁴ Psalm 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).

**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

C3 Examples of [Yahweh's](#) Greatness 135:7 ¹⁰

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.

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

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

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

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

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;

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

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.

¹¹ Psalm 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 Psalm 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 Psalm 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 (Ps. 135:14) His judgment is balanced by His ultimate compassion on His people!

¹⁴ Psalm 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!

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

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.

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, bless¹⁷ 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 revere¹⁸ 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

¹⁶ Psalm 135:18 Title - Lifeless Doom: The point of the analogy is that idol makers and worshipers are 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.

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

¹⁸ Psalm 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 Psalm 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 Psalm 135:21 - Praise the LORD: Heb., *Hallelu Yahn!* This is an emphatic ([Piel](#)) [imperative](#).

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 135

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

June, 2006, updated September 19, 2019

WordExplain.com

Email Contact: jbartsch@wordexplain.com

Scripture taken from the *NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE*®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.
Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)