

Psalm 135 is a Psalm that calls God's people to praise the LORD. This is a Psalm that challenges all kinds of people in all kinds of places to praise God.

The Hebrew word "praise" is a word that means to show the brilliance or brightness and glory of God by praising Him, celebrating Him and boasting in Him (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 226). The idea is to shine forth the glory of God by rejoicing and praising and worshipping Him (Brown-Driver-Briggs, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 237-239).

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO OFFER PRAISE TO THE LORD BY SINGING PRAISES TO HIM AND ABOUT HIM THAT EXALT HIM BECAUSE HE IS A GOD WHO HAS GIVEN US WONDERFUL REASONS TO PRAISE HIM.

When the Holy Spirit, who was used to move men to write inspired Scriptures (II Pet. 1:21), repeats something, it is because He wants to emphasize something and bring something to our careful attention. **What this Psalm certainly reveals is that worship is about elevating God. Shining forth truth about God is what real praise actually is.**

As we will see as we go through this Psalm, praise is not a bunch of emotional fluff or mumbo-jumbo; it is carefully and accurately thinking through truth about God and exalting Him for who and what He is.

MESSAGE #1 – God's people are called to praise the LORD. **135:1-3**

There are six opening praise the LORD admonishments that are given in these opening verses:

Admonition #1 - Praise the LORD. **135:1a**

The noun "LORD" is YH which is short for YHWH which means we are to lift up and exalt God as the great I AM, who is able to do whatever He wants to do as the self-existing almighty God. When we gather together, we are to gather with this view of God in mind.

Admonition #2 - Praise the name of the LORD. **135:1b**

Now the name of the LORD is threefold in the O.T.. There is Jehovah (YHWH), the self-existing Sovereign God; there is Elohim, the Sovereign Creator of all things and there is Adonai that refers to the fact that He is the Sovereign Lord and Master over all. God's people are to praise Him for these names. Furthermore, three more names of God are given that we must not overlook—Lord Jesus Christ. When we praise the name of God, all of these names are in view. One cannot worship God if one does not acknowledge God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Admonition #3 - Praise the LORD servants of the LORD. **135:1c**

As we shall see, this Psalm is for all servants of God and all those who reverence God. Servants of God have the responsibility to exalt God.

Admonition #4 - Praise the LORD those who stand in the house of the LORD. **135:2a**

Now the admonition gets more specific from those who are servants to those who are priests, standing in the house of the LORD. **It is the responsibility of those who go to public worship to exalt God.** It is the responsibility to lift up His name, not our name.

Admonition #5 - Praise the LORD those who stand in the courts of the house of the LORD.
135:2b

Now this has reference to not only the priests in the Lord's house, but those standing in the courtyard just outside the entrance to the Lord's house. All kinds of people gathered there and all were to praise the Lord.

This entire complex was to be a place where people praised God and exalted Him.

Admonition #6 - Praise the LORD by singing praises to His name. **135:3**

Now the pronoun "it" can refer to the name of the LORD or it also can refer to singing praises to the LORD. In fact, in the Greek Septuagint, the "for it is lovely or good" is connected to the verb singing.

When people gather to exalt God, they are to sing praises that exalt God and exalt the name of God. God's name is lovely. It is a lovely thing to do in the sight of God to gather to sing praises to God.

MESSAGE #2 – God gives causes why His people are to praise Him. **135:3-18**

There are at least ten reasons given for praising the LORD:

Reason #1 - God's people are to praise the LORD because the LORD is good. **135:3a**

We could spend hours discussing the goodness of God and not scratch the surface. But God is a good God who does good things and He is to be praised because of it. He does good things to all people even if they don't acknowledge it (Eccl. 2:24-26).

Reason #2 - God's people are to praise the LORD because of His election of Israel. **135:4**

God is to be praised because He has chosen Israel as His nation. Israel is God's chosen "treasured possession." He is to be praised because Israel is chosen and special to Him. The doctrine of election is a great reason to praise the LORD. The fact that God chose you and me is a great reason to praise Him because there was no good reason for Him to have done that. If you want to quibble about the doctrine of election, you minimize your ability to praise God.

It is interesting that Jacob is mentioned. He was the liar and trickster chosen by God. Israel can praise God that of all the nations of the world, God chose her. We can praise God because of all the individuals on the earth, He chose us.

Charles Spurgeon used to say to those who wanted to argue about election: If you want to be saved and if you want to have your sins gone through Christ, then you are the elect. If you don't want to be saved and believe in Christ and have God interfere in your life, then why grumble about the fact that God has not elected you to the very things you don't want?

Reason #3 - God's people are to praise the LORD because He is great. **135:5a**

God is a great God and He is to be greatly praised. Everything about God is great—personality, works, care and provisions. Notice the writer says, “I know.” He had personal and Biblical knowledge.

Reason #4 - God's people are to praise the LORD because He is above all. **135:5b**

Look what is stated here: “our God” is above all things that are considered to be even gods. God is the Highest God and the only God. You cannot offer worship and praise to any higher.

Reason #5 - God's people are to praise the LORD because of His sovereignty. **135:6-7**

This is one of the great reasons to exalt God—His sovereignty (Psalm 115:3). See clearly what is stated here and let God be God in it. God does whatever He pleases to do in heaven and on earth and in the seas. He is not to be questioned or criticized about this; He is to be praised. It is a slap in God's face to deny His sovereignty. God is supreme Ruler and can do what He wants to do. One illustration of that is the weather. God controls clouds, lightning, rain and wind. He can command hurricanes, tornadoes, lightning displays and cause rain.

I was speaking years ago at a Bible conference out east and a man challenged my perspective of God's sovereignty. He said I was an alcoholic and God could not have been sovereign in that. I said really. So I asked him if he thought his alcoholism beat God's sovereignty. Now we know God cannot sin or do evil, but I said do you think when you were an alcoholic you beat God's sovereignty? Then I followed that up by asking “how did you come to faith in Christ?” He said I got fed up with my alcoholism and my loser of a life. I said to him, “Who caused that?” He stood there and said, “God.” It is true God does whatever He pleases in any context.

Reason #6 - God's people are to praise the LORD because of His destruction of enemies.
135:8-11

In these verses, God reminds His people of His protection and deliverances. He delivered Israel from Egypt and many nations. He delivered Israel from the Amorites and the Canaanites. God destroyed nations and kings who tried to demean Israel. He does the same for us. God watches out for us and He can take out our enemies and He is to be praised for it.

Reason #7 - God's people are to praise the LORD because of His giving Israel her land.
135:12

God has promised a specific land to Israel and one day He will give her that land, every inch of it. He is to be praised for this. The sad reality today is that many doubt this or downplay this or disbelieve this. We have God's Word on this point. Israel will one day have all of her Promised Land and wise are people who exalt God for this reason.

Reason #8 - God's people are to praise the LORD because His name is everlasting. **135:13**

God is an everlasting God. He will be remembered forever throughout all of time. People come and go; God is the great God forever.

Reason #9 - God's people are to praise the LORD because of His judgments of His people.
135:14

The Hebrew here indicates that God is judging in behalf of His people. God is a very merciful God to His people and one day God will vindicate His people. He will have mercy on Israel and will bring her to her land. He is to be praised for this. Also we know there will come a day when God will reward those faithful to Him.

Reason #10 - God's people are to praise the LORD because of His judgment of the lost world. **135:15-18**

All of the idols of nations are man-made. Anything that is worshipped other than the true God of the Bible is something invented by men. Ultimately all of the men who promote those things will be condemned and gone. They will end up like the idols they worshipped—they will be dead and gone.

The main idols of nations are silver and gold and the works of man's hand. If men work and accumulate money they think they have it made. But those idols cannot speak or hear or see. Those idols have no life and those who believed in them and trust in them will end up just as the idol—they will be gone.

MESSAGE #3 – God's different classifications of people are to praise the LORD. **135:19-21**

There are four specific groups of people who are singled out who are to praise the LORD:

Group #1 - Israel is to praise the LORD. **135:19a**

The nation Israel is to praise the LORD.

Group #2 - Aaron is to praise the LORD. **135:19b**

The Aaronic priests were to praise the LORD.

Group #3 - Levi is to praise the LORD. **135:20a**

The Levitical priests were to praise the LORD.

Group #4 - Those who revere the LORD are to praise the LORD. **135:20b**

This refers to any who fear the LORD.

Now **verse 21** concludes the Psalm and in this verse we see exactly when this will all ultimately happen. It will happen when Jesus Christ is in Jerusalem and sitting in the Temple on Mt. Zion.

There will come a day when this will all happen and that will be when Jesus Christ is here.