

Psalms 113:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

Analysis

Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. This triadic call to worship opens the Hallel psalms (113-118) with emphatic, repetitive summons. The threefold "Praise" (פָּלָל/halelu) creates rhythmic intensity, each iteration reinforcing the command. Halal means to celebrate, boast, shine, or make a show—exuberant, demonstrative worship, not quiet contemplation.

"Praise ye the LORD" (פָּלָל-יְהָוָה/halelu-Yah)—the familiar "Hallelujah"—frames the psalm (vv. 1, 9), bracketing all creation's praise. This isn't suggestion but command, communal imperative. The object of praise is יה (Yah), shortened form of Yahweh (יְהָוָה), God's covenant name revealed to Moses. Worship isn't generic but directed to the specific God who revealed Himself to Israel.

"O ye servants of the LORD" (עֲבָדִי יְהָוָה/avdei Yahweh) identifies the worshipers: those who serve God. Eved can mean slave or servant, emphasizing both submission and relationship. These aren't casual admirers but committed servants whose lives belong to God. Finally, **"praise the name of the LORD"** (אַתְּ שֵׁם יְהָוָה/et-shem Yahweh) shifts from praising God Himself to praising His name—His revealed character, reputation, and attributes. God's name encompasses all He has disclosed about Himself.

Historical Context

Psalms 113-118 comprise the Egyptian Hallel, sung during Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Hanukkah. Specifically, Psalms 113-114 were sung before the Passover meal, 115-118 after. Jesus and His disciples sang these psalms at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30), making Psalm 113's call to praise Jesus's own worship before His crucifixion. The designation 'servants of the LORD' originally applied to Levitical priests and temple singers but expanded to include all Israel and ultimately all believers who serve God through Christ.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the threefold repetition of 'praise' challenge passive or half-hearted worship in your own life?
2. What does it mean to identify as a 'servant of the LORD'—how should this identity shape daily priorities and decisions?
3. What aspects of 'the name of the LORD'—His revealed character—most inspire your praise, and how can you cultivate greater awareness of His nature?

Interlinear Text

אַתָּה יְהֹוָה לֵלֹו לֵלֹו יְהֹוָה לֵלֹו

Praise	ye the LORD	Praise	O ye servants	of the LORD	Praise	H853
H1984	H3050	H1984	H5650	H3068	H1984	

יְהֹוָה: the name of the LORD
H8034 H3068

