

Psalms 135:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

A grand praise psalm begins with triple call to worship: 'Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD.' The threefold 'praise' emphasizes urgency and importance. 'Praise ye the LORD' translates 'Hallelujah' (hallelu-Yah), the imperative form calling people to praise Yahweh. The second call 'praise ye the name of the LORD' focuses on God's revealed character - His 'name' represents His nature, attributes, and reputation. The third call 'praise him, O ye servants of the LORD' addresses specific audience - those who serve God. 'Servants' (avadim) can mean slaves or worshipers - those devoted to God's service. This opening creates crescendo effect, building intensity through repetition. The psalm functions as extended meditation on why God deserves praise, grounding worship in theology.

Historical Context

Psalms 135 draws heavily from other biblical texts, functioning as anthology or compilation of praise themes. It shares language with Psalms 115, 134, 136 and echoes exodus and conquest narratives. The psalm likely functioned in temple liturgy, leading corporate worship by rehearsing God's character and mighty acts.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Why does the psalm open with triple call to praise rather than immediate reasons for praise?
2. How does praising God's 'name' differ from generically praising God?
3. What does it mean to be 'servants of the LORD' and how does this identity relate to worship?
4. How does repetition function to deepen worship's intensity and focus?
5. In what ways does this opening model enthusiastic, urgent call to corporate worship?

Interlinear Text

הַלְלוּ	יְהוָה	הַלְלוּ	אֶת	שֵׁם	יְהוָה:	הַלְלוּ
Praise	ye the LORD	Praise	H853	ye the name	of the LORD	Praise
H1984	H3050	H1984		H8034	H3068	H1984
עַבְדֵי יְהוָה:						
him O ye servants	of the LORD					
H5650	H3068					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 7:17 (Resurrection): I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

Psalms 106:1 (Resurrection): Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 107:8 (Resurrection): Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Psalms 111:1 (Resurrection): Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

Psalms 112:1 (Resurrection): Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

Psalms 148:13 (Resurrection): Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.

Psalms 150:6 (Resurrection): Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Psalms 102:21 (Resurrection): To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

Psalms 134:1 (References Lord): Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

Nehemiah 9:5 (Resurrection): Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.