

Psalm 135

Evening Prayer Friday Week 3
verses 1-12 Morning Prayer Monday Week 4

This is an invitation to the assembly to praise YHWH, the Creator and Liberator of his people, Israel. The lack of any mention of a king suggests it is post-exilic. It abounds in quotations and traditional statements of faith.

Praying it as Christians we think of the risen Jesus; his power in creation (see John 1:3) and in liberation (see Matthew 28:18).

He was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

– Romans 1:4

He must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

– 1Corinthians 15:25

The invitation to join in praising YHWH is followed by an expression of faith in the fact that Israel is precious to YHWH. ‘Treasured possession’ in verse 4 translates the Hebrew *sēgullā* [סְגֻלָּה], which occurs only here in the psalms and only 8 times in the Hebrew Bible. The classical text is in the Book of Exodus:

If you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples.

– Exodus 19:5

You are a people holy to YHWH your God;
YHWH your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

– Deuteronomy 7:6 (14:2)

Today YHWH has obtained your agreement: to be his treasured people, as he promised you, and to keep his commandments.

– Deuteronomy 26:18

They shall be mine, says YHWH of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as parents spare their children who serve them.

– Malachi 3:17

The other two texts are Ecclesiastes 2:8 and 1Chronicles 29:3. It speaks of something personal and something especially treasured by the owner.

¹Praise YH! [Hal'êlû Yâ]

**Praise the name of YHWH*;
praise him, O servants of
YHWH,**

**²you that stand in the house
of YHWH, in the courts of the
house of our God.**

**³Praise YH, for YHWH is good;
sing to his name, for he is gra-
cious*.**

**⁴For YHWH chooses Jacob for
himself, Israel as his own
treasured possession.**

⁵I know that YHWH is great; our Lord, the greatest of the gods.

‘Now I know that YHWH is greater than all gods’ (Jethro - Exodus 18:11)

**⁶Whatever YHWH wants to do he does,
in heaven and on earth, in the sea and in the deep.**

**⁷He brings the clouds up from the horizon;
he scatters the rain with lightning,
and brings out the wind from his storehouses.**

‘He makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightnings for the rain, and he brings out the wind from his storehouses’ (Jeremiah 10:13)

**⁸He struck down the first born of Egypt,
human beings and animals alike;**

‘YHWH struck down all the first born in the land of Egypt’ (Exodus 12:29).

**⁹he sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt,
against Pharaoh and all his servants.**

¹⁰He struck down many nations and killed mighty kings –

**¹¹Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan,
and all the kings of Canaan.**

¹²He gave their land as a heritage, a heritage to his people Israel.

**¹³Your name, YHWH, endures forever,
your renown, YHWH, throughout all ages.**

**¹⁴For YHWH will vindicate his people,
and have compassion on his servants.**

‘YHWH will vindicate his people, and have compassion on his servants.’
(Deuteronomy 32:36)

¹⁵The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands.

**¹⁶They have mouths, but they do not speak;
they have eyes, but they do not see;**

**¹⁷they have ears, but they do not hear,
and there is no breath in their mouths.**

¹⁸Those who make them and all who trust them shall become like them.

Compare Psalm 115:4-8

¹⁹O house of Israel, bless* YHWH!

O house of Aaron, bless* YHWH!

²⁰O house of Levi, bless* YHWH!

You that fear* YHWH, bless* YHWH!

**²¹Blessed be YHWH from Zion,
he who resides in Jerusalem.**

Praise YH! [Hal'êlû Yâ]