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Psalm 135

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



**Learn the
Bible
at Home**

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 135.

Topics.

- Praise the name of the LORD! Sing praise to his name, for it is pleasant.
- Praise and understanding, Christ and praying without ceasing.
- The LORD has chosen Jacob and Israel as His own possession.
- God controls creation and the nations and vindicates His people.
- Idols have no breath; those who make them become like them.
- People of Israel, Aaron, Levi, Zion, Jerusalem! Praise the LORD!
- The Commonwealth of Israel and the glory of the temple of Christ.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

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BOOK FIVE (PSALM 107-150)

PSALM 135:1-3

Sing Praises to the Name of the LORD, for it is Pleasant.

- **Psalm 135:1-3:** Praise the LORD! Praise the name of the LORD, give praise, O servants of the LORD, ²who stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God! ³Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; sing to his name, for it is pleasant!

Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the LORD: (v2) these three verses are calling all God's people to praise the LORD who made heaven and earth. God should be praised as God, the Creator and the God of nature and the God of providence and as the God who allows those who dwell on the earth to run their affairs as they please until the appointed time of judgment. Following are two types of praise:

1. Praise prompted from a sense of duty and tradition led by a trained choir and professional musicians standing in front of the congregation which is formal in its nature of praise and once the worshippers have left the building the praise is ended.
2. Praise that flows continually up from the heart and mind in thanksgiving and heartfelt gratitude toward God. This type of praise is also often led by a trained choir and professional musicians standing in front of the congregation, but it has one major difference in that the praise flows up from the heart and when the worshippers leave the building the thanksgiving and praise continues on in the heart and mind throughout the worshippers daily life.

The praise the Psalmist is calling those dwelling on the earth to praise God with is the praise that flows upward from an honest heart of gratitude and thankfulness toward the Creator of all the earth. It is only praise that originates in the heart that rises up before God's throne like sweet smelling incense.

Praise and understanding: means when we praise God we should pray with the understanding and clearly know why we are praising God. Without an understanding of God and why we are praising Him our worship is lacking. Unless we have the Kingdom of God established in our minds and the spirit of praise toward the Lord reigns in our hearts by faith our praise is left shallow and empty.

Praise and the Lord Jesus Christ: without understanding the message of the bloodstained cross of Calvary; Jesus death and resurrection; the Gospel and God's grace praise toward our heavenly Father and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ will be nothing but the empty praise of duty and tradition motivated not from a heartfelt spirit of love toward God and our Saviour and redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ, but motivated by a choir professionally trained for such a purpose. The Bible is primarily about man's way back to God, deliverance from eternal death, forgiveness of sin and eternal life. If a billionaire came to you and said he was going to give you one billion dollars, nothing else in the world would matter to you, all your financial problems would be solved for all your remaining years, you could have whatever you desired, that is how valuable the prophets, the apostles and the faithful of the Old and New Testament viewed God's gift of eternal life. In the eyes of the faithful of the Old and New Testament everything else pales before God's gift of eternal life, it is because of this gift that supersedes everything the world can give they are able to thank and extol the LORD always.

Pray without ceasing: Paul told Christians "to pray without ceasing," (1 Thess. 5:17) this does not mean, hide in a closet and pray all day, (no-one has time to do this, nor does God expect it of anyone, rather it means that no matter what you are doing always be talking to God and praising Him in your mind. Let the chatter of self-talk that is constantly flowing through the mind be in communion and in prayer with God and the Lord Jesus Christ as you go about your daily work. To explain the words, "pray without ceasing" a faithful Christian woman wrote: think of a mother who has a child who is ill with a fever. Finally, the fever breaks and the mother and child settle down for some much-needed sleep. Not a noise from the television, from the street, or from the phone could awaken that mother, but one whimper from her child and she's awake, right? That's because even when she is asleep, she is in tune with that child—just as we are to be with God...constantly communing and attuned to His voice and praising and talking to Him in the silent world of our thoughts. Prayer to us should be as natural and continual as breathing. A devoted and faithful Christian teacher asked her classroom the following question: "Do you have a prayer life or are you living a praying life?" Think about the difference.

PSALM 135:4

The LORD has Chosen Jacob and Israel as His Own Possession.

- **Psalm 135:4:** For the LORD has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his own possession.

The following verses show that the United Kingdom of Israel has always been God's special and unique nation unlike any other nation.

God said:

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age. (Isaiah 46:3-4).

- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).
- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to any other nation:

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power. (Exodus 20:1-17).
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules. (Rom. 9:4)
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises. (Romans 3:4)
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory. (Romans 3:5)
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted. (Rom. 3:2)
- The people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith. (Romans 9:7)
- From Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the world. (Rom. 9:5)

Added to these God said:

- Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine (Exod. 19:5).
- The LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments (Deut. 26:18).

The Psalmist wrote:

- God declared his word to Jacob, his statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 147:19-20).

The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges. These are the many reasons the Jews (especially the religious leaders of Jesus generation) considered themselves to be the holy race with God and the Gentile nations to be the unclean race without God.

The thermometer of God's prophecy: it is true that Israel has been and still is a special nation to God, but since Christ death and resurrection salvation for both Jews and Gentiles is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, Israel remains a clear sign of where we are in prophecy concerning Christ's return. It could be said that they are the thermometer of God's prophecy much like the mercury on a natural thermometer measures the heat of the day and moves up the vertical red line warning us of impending danger when the heat of the sun is reaching temperatures that are dangerous for the good health of the skin and our well-being. Likewise Israel can be seen as the mercury of Bible prophecy in the sense that world events that come upon the nation of Israel (especially Jerusalem) are signs that give us some insight as to how close we are to that glorious breathtaking and world changing day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory. But God's focus during our present age for eternal salvation is upon creating a new nation in Christ made up of Jews and Gentiles. This new nation is also called a new creation in Christ, the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the church and the Kingdom of God. For further information concerning this new nation God is building in Christ see the title: "The Commonwealth of Israel," at the end of this chapter.

Whatever the LORD Pleases, He does, in Heaven, Earth, the Seas.

- **Psalm 135:5-12:** For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.
⁶Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.
⁷He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth, who makes lightnings for the rain and brings forth the wind from his storehouses. ⁸He it was who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and of beast; ⁹who in your midst, O Egypt, sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants; ¹⁰who struck down many nations and killed mighty kings, ¹¹Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan, ¹²and gave their land as a heritage, a heritage to his people Israel.

The LORD is Great, above all gods: (v1) for further information concerning these other gods see the notes following (verses 15-18) under the title: "Idols have Mouths, but no Breath; those who Make them Become Like Them," (below).

Whatever the LORD pleases, he does: (v6) means that God will accomplish what He purposed, He is able to achieve His foreordained plans regardless of what man does because the LORD makes the clouds, lightning, the wind, it is God who directs creation and controls the nations. God sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh and struck down Egypt's firstborn. He killed Sihon, king of and Og, king of Bashan, two mighty kings and all the kingdoms of Canaan, to fulfil His promise and give their land as a heritage, to His people Israel. (v7-12). The land of king Sihon and king Bashan is part of the Promised Land on the wilderness side of the Jordan River (the east side) it was allotted to the tribes of Gad and Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh. All the land of Canaan was allotted to the remaining ten and a half tribes.

NOTICE: the mindset of the Old Testament faithful was such that everything (good or bad) was credited to the LORD. For them God controlled all that happened, there was no such thing as luck or coincidence. Throughout the Psalms each writer views God as the one directing their lives, whether it was joyful or troublesome, exciting or depressive, successful or otherwise God was the one controlling everything. The following attitude of Job and Habakkuk shine a brilliant spotlight upon the great faith of the Old Testament faithful. Even though Job suffered great affliction his attitude was:

- Though he slays me, yet will I trust in him (Job 13:15).

Habakkuk begins his prayer saying, "Even though his body trembles at the power of the LORD and he feels weak and feeble because of the enemies who are coming to invade his land, he will quietly wait for the day of trouble." He then ends his prayer with the following great words of faith.

- Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
¹⁹GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. (Hab. 3:17-19).

Job and Habakkuk made the LORD their fortress and refuge by making him their greatest love, their best thought and the passion of their heart and mind and rested in the knowledge that if everything fails in this life they would be raised to be with the Lord in eternal glory where happiness everlasting dwells and while living in this life rested in the confidence and faith that the Lord was with them by his Spirit, his love and his grace.

A personal note: I have seen a man born with no legs and no arms, (Nick Vujicic) who to the natural mind would appear a mistake made by God, but this man lived his life before God worshipped him and kept a right attitude as did David, Job and Habakkuk. He is an amazing testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and went on to become one of the world's greatest

motivational speakers. He is an encouragement to hundreds of thousands of people who are suffering their own difficult circumstances. I have heard testimonies of teenage girls who have suffered absolute horror, terror and abuse find the love of God and go on to become the source of comfort to many hurting girls in similar circumstances and help them live a life of mental and emotional freedom and joy. We may not all reach hundreds of people, but if we take the right attitude to difficult circumstance, we can all be an amazing testimony to God and to those who know us. While on this side of eternity no-one is exempt from trouble and difficulty, it is the attitude and who we go through it with that makes the difference. God does not promise freedom from trouble but He does promise comfort, love and strength to cope and grow from it.

PSALM 135:13-14

God Controls Creation and the Nations and Vindicates His People.

- **Psalm 135:13-14:** Your name, O LORD, endures forever, your renown, O LORD, throughout all ages. ¹⁴For the LORD will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants.

Vindicated: carries the idea of being proved right

The prophet Isaiah wrote:

- Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame." (Isaiah 49:23).

God vindicated His people Israel many times when they faithfully followed Him or turned to Him in repentance and turned from their wicked ways. The apostle Paul wrote:

- The Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." (Romans 10:11).
- It is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." (Rom. 9:33).
- It stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." (1 Peter 2:6-7).

Many in our world today consider Christians naïve and childish to believe in such an ancient book as the Bible and to believe in the Old Testament stories (i.e., Noah's ark, the ten plagues, the parting of the Red Sea and the River Jordan, the sun standing still and such like things). This is especially true when the faithful share the return of Christ and God's Kingdom on earth, but those who believe such things will be vindicated meaning what they believe will be proven to be true. The ultimate vindication of all of God's people will be when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords to gather his people to himself and establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

PSALM 135:15-18

Those who Make Idols that have no Breath Become Like Them.

- **Psalm 135:15-18:** The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. ¹⁶They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see; ¹⁷they have ears, but do not hear, nor is there any breath in their mouths. ¹⁸Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them!

Even though idols are the work of human hands and cannot speak, see or hear and there is no life in them many pagan nations and even Jews at various times believed in idols and other gods. Though Idol's and false gods have no life within themselves they do have a strong influence upon those who believe in them. This is because they are given spiritual power in the mind and over the human nervous system by a strong belief in them. False gods are created in the mind and the imagination by a strong belief in them. The human nervous system does not have a mind of its own and therefore automatically responds to whatever is pictured on the imagination whether it is real or false. The stronger the belief the greater effect the mental image on the imagination of the mind will have on the human nervous system.

This is why deception is so deceptive. It matters not if the god people believe in is real or not the nervous system responds accordingly. If the god a person believes in is a wrathful, vengeful and judgmental god they will feel emotions of guilt and fear in contrast to this if the god a person believes in is a god of love and compassion, they will feel emotions of love and comfort. The imaginary, but real images of the mind creates a real entity that affects the emotions and feelings through the human nervous system. These feelings convince those that believe in idols that there are evil gods and spirits, but in reality, they do not actually exist, they are an entity created by a false belief of the mind, but to the person believing in idols and false gods they are very real entities. This is why faith should be based upon the Scriptures of the Bible and never upon on emotions.

This does not mean emotions should be denied, God gave them to us to enjoy (especially in worship and praise) it just means that they should not be the foundation of our faith and what we believe. It is through reading the Bible that we learn who the one and only immortal, invisible, eternal God is and His eternal will, plans and purposes for the world, the earth and for eternity. Clearly no idol or god of the imagination has any power to create the earth, the mountains the seas and the heavens there is only one God who has such awesome power and He is the Holy Almighty God of all creation and the source of all life the great I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For further information concerning gods of the imaginations see:

- Demons in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Those who make idols become like them, so do all who trust in them: (v18) this is written in the context of idols having no breath in them meaning they are lifeless so the statement those who make and trust in idols become like them means they will also become lifeless (meaning they will die never to rise again).

PSALM 135:19-21

O People of Israel, Aaron, Levi, Zion, Jerusalem! Praise the LORD!

- **Psalm 135:19-21:** O house of Israel, bless the LORD! O house of Aaron, bless the LORD! ²⁰O house of Levi, bless the LORD! You who fear the LORD, bless the LORD! ²¹Blessed be the LORD from Zion, he who dwells in Jerusalem! Praise the LORD!

This Psalm ends in the same way that it started calling all God's people no matter where they maybe to praise the LORD.

Bless the LORD you who fear the LORD: (v20) the fear of the LORD has the following two aspects:

- 1 An eternal aspect: wisdom teaches that mankind is separated from God because of sin and without God a person has no hope of eternal life and will be judged accordingly. The fear of the LORD in this context is wisdom because it motivates a person to seek God and eternal life.

- 2 An aspect for the present moment: the fear of the LORD in the present moment motivates mankind to obey God's Ten Commandments which are all designed to protect the innocent from harm, physically, financially, sexually, verbally, emotionally and spiritually. The fear of the LORD in this context is also wisdom because if everyone feared the LORD humanity would live in harmony with each other. Sadly, there is very little fear of the LORD in the world today and so we see rampant rebellion, violence, crime and wars in most countries.

The fear of God and Christians: those in Christ look to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and understand and experience Christ's great love and God's grace in their hearts and minds and no longer act from fear, but from love in the same way that a man in love with a woman does not do things to please her from fear, but from the love dwelling in his heart. Likewise, it is with the faithful who belong to the Lords global family.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said:

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world. The practical application of what this means to those who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

THE GLORY OF THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE GOD IS BUILDING IN CHRIST

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles' teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity.

When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building, (taken from the beautiful writings of a faithful, but unknown brother in Christ). Peter wrote:

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when:

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
