

**God stoops down**  
*Psalm 113; Luke 15:8-10*

**Introduction:** People are limited. Even the best people working together to do good to their fellow human beings eventually get to the point where their progress stops. On rare occasions they reach their goal. Even then, setbacks happen, setbacks that often lead to frustration and the breaking of the best and the brightest. \*\*\* Both philosophers and fables observe that people of limited resources are generally more contented with their lives and more able to experience joy than would be philanthropists (lovers of mankind) with many resources. \*\*\* This truth is behind the Beatitudes Jesus gave as the introduction to His famous inaugural sermon: Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; happy are those who mourn, for they will be comforted; happy are the meek, for they will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:3-5). \*\*\* Isaiah was inspired by God to write a chapter about how God is much greater than His creation, and yet, He will freely and graciously quench both thirst and hunger of those who seek Him so they will go out with joy and be led forth with peace (Isaiah 55). \*\*\* The psalm we are considering as our main text brings out one of the amazing and beautiful paradoxes of God. Namely, the exalted Creator and Lord of the vast universe, whose glory is beyond human understanding, is also the One who looks (stoops) down with compassion on the poor and needy to lift them up to Himself to make them volunteers with Him as He builds His Kingdom on earth. This is only possible for those who are IN Jesus by repentance from human pride to child-like humble faith. \*\*\* Let us now dig deeper into our Bible passages.

**I. The greatness of the exalted and glorious God.** (*Psalm 113:1-5*)

A. His servants are to praise His Name and bless Him eternally with daily praise. (*Verses 1-3*)

1. You all must praise Yah! (*Verse 1a*)

**Introductory command:** Literally: *Häl-loo-yäh*, anglicized to Hallelu-Yah. This short command begins and ends this psalm, the first of six sung at the annual Passover meal by the returning exiles.

2. You all must praise, servants of Yahweh / You all must praise the Name of Yahweh! (*Verses 1b-c*)

**Servants:** The word is sometimes translated bondservant or slave. This is what Israel was in Egypt. When used with Yahweh it can mean worshipper.

**Name:** Some rabbis think Y-H-W-H is an acronym meaning in English: 'He will be (what) He is being and He has been'. An excellent way to think of God who initiated the covenant with His people beginning at the burning bush: 'I have taken you all to Me, people; and, I have been to you all, God' (Exodus 6:2-8; Jeremiah 7:21-26; Ezekiel 36:24-32; Joel 2:26-32).

3. It will be, the Name of Yahweh being blessed / from now and until eternity. (*Verse 2*)

**Blessed:** People bless God by bowing their knees to Him, they praise Him with boastful shouts to Him.

**Long time:** 'From now until eternity' is a poetic way to say: forever we will bow to the Covenant God and boast to Him so all people will hear.

4. From the place of rising (east) of the sun until the going down of it / it is being praised, the Name of Yahweh. (*Verse 3*)

**Today:** This is more about time than location. God's covenant people are saying His name will be praised by them every waking minute – from the first rays of the day until the light fades away.

B. He is high above people and glorious, unique and dwelling on high. (*Verses 4-5*)

1. He has been raised above all nations, Yahweh / above the heavens, His glory. (*Verse 4*)

**People:** The Covenant God is far above all people and nations on earth (see also Psalm 97:9).

**Universe:** And His glory is above the universe He created. God is awesome in both His exaltation and His glory as Creator over all He created!

2. Who (is) like Yahweh, God of us / making Himself high to sit. (*Verse 5*)

**Rhetorical question:** The Hebrew 'Micah' (*mee-c<sup>e</sup>-Yäh*) – 'who like Yahweh' is a rhetorical question with the obvious answer: no one at all, anywhere, anytime!

**Sitting high:** He sits higher than anyone or anything He has created. He is the Sovereign King of all He has made, sitting on His throne which He has also made.

**Bottom Line:** The first half of this psalm is all about the glorious greatness of the eternal, all-powerful, exalted Creator!

**II. And God humbles Himself (stoops down) to lift up and care for the lowest people on earth; and, heaven rejoices when one sinner turns to Him.** (*Psalm 113:6-9; Luke 15:8-10*)

A. God humbles Himself through heaven to earth to lift up poor and needy people to be noble volunteers, and makes a barren woman be a joyful mother of children. (*Psalm 113:6-9*)

1. Making Himself low to look / in the heavens and in the earth. (*Verse 6*)

**Making Himself low:** The King James Version translated this as 'humbling Himself'. In modern English vernacular, the New International Version hits the mark: 'Who stoops down'. What a contrast! What a paradox! The God who was just proclaimed in praise as exalted and glorious above all, is now declared to be the God who stoops down to look all the way to the surface of the earth that He created for people to steward because He made them in His image. **God stoops down.**

2. He Himself is making to rise from the dust, the poor / from the ash-heap, He will make to rise, the needy (beggar). (*Verse 7*)

**Poor and needy:** The poor, needy, widow, orphan and sojourner-refugee are God's specially chosen and protected people. In this psalm, His people declare in their worship of Him, that God will raise and lift these people up from the dust and ash-heap, the most inhospitable of locations.

**Bottom Line:** The greatest and highest God is ALSO very near to the most overlooked people of all. He will show them compassion and care for them by lifting them up. He did this twice for the nation of Israel: when He delivered them from slavery in Egypt; and, when He brought back a remnant of those exiled to Babylon. We must understand and praise God for His eternal covenant to those He has chosen because they were made poor and needy.

We must thank and praise God that **God stoops down.**

3. To make to sit with princes / with the princes of the people of Him. (*Verse 8*)

**Princes:** The root of the word means to be willing to do deeds of noble character. If we lived in Tennessee, we would be proud to call them 'volunteers'! This word is used twice in the song Deborah ('bee' from a 'sharp' word) and Barak ('lightning') sang when Yahweh used them to lead willing and noble volunteers from Ephraim, Benjamin, Makir (Manasseh's oldest son), Zebulun and Issachar (five tribes) to fight with them against the kings of Canaan, while Rueben, Gilead (Makir's son, east of the Jordan), Dan and Asher (four tribes) selfishly stayed home (Judges 5, especially verses 2 and 9). Let us desire to be noble volunteers to fight in God's spiritual battles, just as the five tribes who followed Barak and Deborah to participate in God's victory over the kings of Canaan.

4. Making abiding the barren of the house / the mother of children glad (joyful) // You all must praise Yah! (*Verse 9*)

**Barren:** Barren women were enabled by Yahweh to bear children: Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel. But this refers to Hannah (grace), the mother of Samuel. She was taunted by Elkanah's other wife and prayed in desperation near Eli the priest. When she gave birth to Samuel and dedicated him to Yahweh by leaving him with Eli after he was weaned, Eli prophesied every year to Elkanah and Hannah: He will appoint, Yahweh, to you offspring ... instead of Samuel. Yahweh was gracious to Hannah and she gave birth to three sons and two daughters (1 Samuel 1-2).

**Covenant God raises up lowly:** We must always appreciate how wonderful God is. He is the only exalted and glorious One who also humbles Himself (stoops down) to graciously lift up those who are poor and needy on earth. **God stoops down.**

- B. Jesus tells a parable of a woman having joy when she finds ten percent of her wealth to declare there is more joy before God when one sinner repents. (*Luke 15:8-10*)

1. Or what woman, drachmas having ten, if she may lose drachma one, not she is lighting a candle and she is sweeping the house and she is seeking carefully until which (drachma) she may find? (*Verse 8*)

**Lost a day's wages:** A drachma was equivalent to a denarius, a day's wage. She had saved almost two week's wages, but has now lost ten percent of her margin. Or was it her tithe?

**Careful search:** Jesus said she would go to great lengths to carefully search for what she lost. Just as in the psalm, Jesus tells a parable with a rhetorical question.

2. And, having found it, she is calling together the friends and neighbors, saying: You all must be rejoiced together with me, because I have found the drachma which I had lost. (*Verse 9*)

**After she found:** Her finding what she lost meant so much to her that she called together the important people in her life: family and friends.

**Shared joy:** She was insisting that they share in her joy. Many people have their joy increased when they can share it with others. Jesus presents this woman favorably in His parable because her attitude of sharing joy is pleasing to God.

**Bottom Line:** As part of being in the image of God, people are excited and joyful when they find what is lost, and they want to share this joy with people with whom they have a close relationship.

3. Likewise, I am saying to you all, it is being joy in the presence of the angels (messengers) of God over one sinner repenting. (*Verse 10*)

**Heavenly joy:** Created beings around God's throne are experiencing joy when people respond to God's grace in Jesus.

**One sinner repents:** When one sinner begins to continuously repent, turn from himself and his way of thinking, feeling and desiring, to seek God and His will in everything he does, all heaven rejoices.

*Heaven rejoices over one repentant sinner*

**Peter's first sermon:** When the people who heard Peter's Pentecost sermon asked what they could do, his first command was: You all must repent (Acts 2:38).

**Peter at the Temple:** Later, after God healed a lame man in the Temple courts in the name of Jesus, Peter addressed the crowd and reminded them that they crucified Jesus, so they must repent and turn to God so their sins would be wiped out and times of refreshing may come (Acts 3:11-20).

**Paul on the road:** When Paul testified to king Agrippa he said that he obeyed God by preaching to the nations that they should repent and be worthy of the repentance, works practicing (Acts 26:19-20).

**God's heart:** Peter's second letter explains that God's heart desires all people might be saved through repentance. God is not desiring any to perish, but all into repentance to come (2 Peter 3:8). Whenever any sinner repents, one more person has crossed over from perishing in sin to having life in Jesus. Let us pray and work that all will repent of whatever is in their lives that requires repentance, because God and all heaven will rejoice.

*Heaven rejoices over one repentant sinner*

**Conclusion:** Servants of the Covenant God are exhorted to praise His Name and daily bless Him as the One who is highly exalted above all He has made, and who dwells in glory. And yet, He humbles Himself (stoops down) to look through the heavens to see the poor and needy on earth to lift them up to be His volunteers. This causes great joy in heaven over all who repent and come to Him in humble dependent faith.

**God stoops down**