

B. Praise Yahweh is by imitation.

- i. As we engage the poor, the downtrodden, the needy, we are called to do so in imitation of the God who is like this!

John Goldingay: “Here ‘the distinctiveness of Yahweh is not based on grand cosmic claims’ but on Yhwh’s transformative interventions in the lives of the powerless. The definition of God is as one who lifts the literal poor from the literal rubbish heap and turns the literal infertile woman into a literal mother.”

- ii. We don’t have the option of becoming “like God” only in the metaphorical sense of this. We must become like God in the literal sense of this! With actual poor and powerless people.

### LIVE THE STORY

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- How does this Biblical call to worship (Psalm 113) differ from the not uncommon practice of simply urging people to praise/worship God?
- Who is like our God? Of those things which the psalmist lists that God does, what draws your heart to worship? Why?
- Is it fair to say that the psalmist is calling us to praise the God of the Incarnation? Explain.
- What is the focal point of God’s self-revelation in Scripture?
- Why does God humble Himself to look in the heavens and the earth? How might vss. 5-9 describe God trading places with the lowly? Can you think of NT verses that capture this succinctly?
- How is what God does with the lowly different than a typical rags to riches story? How does that speak to our calling?
- What are the two ways that we are called to praise God?
- Why might obedience to Psalm 113 be the essence of evangelism?
- Why is imitation of God’s self-lowering to lift up the needy essential to our response of praise?

## Praise the God of the Incarnation

Jerry Cisar — December 20, 2020

Text: Psalm 113

### Introduction: The God of the *Incarnation*

*Worship is the creature’s response to what God has made known about Himself.*

Who is this God Psalm 113 calls us to praise? *The God of the Incarnation.*

### I. Who Humbles Himself to Look (5-6)

#### A. God Humbles Himself

- i. God makes Himself low.

- ii. To Look in...

- iii. The Incarnation is God Humbling Himself

- a) Philippians 2:6-7
- b) Hebrews 2:9, 14-15; 4:15; 5:2
- c) John 14:8-9

*If you want to see what God is like, you must see how He acts, what He does. And what He does is make Himself low to look in the heavens and the earth. That is what they saw in Jesus. The Incarnation.*

#### B. It is in this revelation of God that He is most glorious.

- i. Different theologians focus on different aspects of God.
- ii. What does *God Himself* focus on? Jesus—God’s self-humbling and self-giving love.
- iii. Who is like our God who humbles Himself to look on the heavens and the earth?

## II. Who Raises and Lifts the Lowly (7-9)

- A. Why does God humble Himself to come and look about the heavens and the earth? In order to find the poor and lift them from the dust and from the dung heap or burn pile.
- i. God spends His time and resources on the lowly, and in so doing, exalts or lifts the poor and needy.
  - ii. God trades places, so to speak, with the poor and needy and the barren woman.

Charles Spurgeon: “[God] frequently lifts the lowest of mankind out of their poverty and degradation, and places them in positions of power and honour. His good Spirit is continually visiting the down-trodden, giving beauty for ashes to those who are cast down, and elevating the hearts of his mourners till they shout for joy.”

➤ 2 Corinthians 8:9

- iii. The Lord’s rescue is a complete package!
    - a) The lowliness of the lowly is more than poverty and hunger, it involves degradation and shame. Deliverance must also involve more than merely food and clothing but restoration to a proper place in the community.
    - b) The church, when it functions according to God’s plan, is so uniquely suited to meet the need. (See Psa. 68:6.)
  - iv. This is no “rags to riches” story.
- B. The Barren Woman
- i. Consistent with Israel’s history
    - a) Sarah
    - b) Rachel
    - c) Hannah’s song.
  - ii. Mary’s song. Mary was barren because she did not have a husband. She was a virgin.

a) Luke 1:46-55

b) In the Incarnation, the virgin birth, this Psalm began being fulfilled in its ultimate sense.

- C. This is what we adore about Yahweh.
- i. Yahweh’s name represents all that He has made known about Himself by His lowering Himself to raise the lowly.
    - a) Moses and the Burning Bush (Exo. 3:13-14)
    - b) The lead-in for that story is Exodus 2:23b-25.
  - ii. The connection between Psalm 113 and Passover.
  - iii. God raised and lifted up/exalted the poor when He exalted Jesus, giving Him the name above every name, seating Him at His own right hand! (Phil. 2:9-11)

## III. Praise Yahweh (9c)

- A. Praise YHWH because of what He is like!
- i. God’s self-humbling to rescue us is the strongest, most secure, and most stable foundation of praise in the Church.
  - ii. When a believer contemplates this aspect of God’s activity, joy and adoration will fill their hearts.
  - iii. This is the essence of evangelism.
    - a) 1Peter 2:9-10
    - b) “the word of their testimony”
    - c) The Gospel is fundamentally about what God has done. To praise God is to talk about what He has done.