

# Psalm 133:1-3

A Song of degrees of David.

**“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*”**

## *Introduction*

“We have come as far as Psalm 133, Psalm 133 and 134 conclude the Songs of Ascent, the Songs of Ascent from Psalm 120 to 134. A week ago we were driving up from the Dead Sea to Jerusalem, reading some of these Psalms of Ascent, as you come up to the city, wonderfully, from the lowest place on the face of the earth, 1200-foot below sea level to Jerusalem, about 2400-foot above sea level. Just the whole time you’re coming up, and you can imagine these pilgrims then, some perhaps on camels if they were wealthy, or burrows, most of them walking, coming up to Jerusalem to worship, **‘Our feet shall stand in thy gate,’** and so forth. Psalm 133 kind of gives us a picture of them gathered, I’m sure it foreshadows, looks forward to a greater gathering that is ahead of all of us. It tells us that this in fact is a song of David. And it says **“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*”** So this Psalm now speaking, no doubt of all of the tribes coming up [and that’s all 12 tribes, Judah, the Jews being only one of them] to be together there in Jerusalem, for the Feast [and that could be for Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread (8 days), or 50 days later, Pentecost, or Shevuot (for one day) or then the Fall Holy Days, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement and then the 8-day Feast of Tabernacles. see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/messianicmovement/Holydayshadow.s.htm> to learn more about these Holy Days].

*“Behold, How Good And How Pleasant It Is For Brethren To Dwell In Unity!” What Is That Unity Talking About?*

**“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (verse 1)** It’s kind of “how good it is, how pleasant it is,” think of that. And there’s a “behold,” something observable about it. Ah, “behold,” is “to be seen, it’s to be noticed,” it’s rare for sure, but it’s something to be beheld. Jesus said to us, **‘By the love that we have one for another, all men would know that we are his disciples,’** that’s something that’s observable. This says here, **“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”** “Unity,” you know, really in one sense, a huge subject in Scripture. But it’s the only time the word “unity” is used in our English translation in the Old Testament there in that verse. And it’s only used twice in the New Testament, in ***Ephesians chapter 4***, says, **“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (verse 3)** “Endeavoring to keep” not to create, not to make, not to produce, ah, ***this unity is something that is bestowed upon us as we’re saved.*** If you’re washed in the blood of Christ, I’m washed in the blood of Christ, if the Spirit of Christ dwells in you and the Spirit of Christ dwells in me, that eternal Spirit, that eternal work of Christ supercedes all human endeavors. So it says **“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”** certainly that should happen. Then it says, over in **verse 13 of *Ephesians 4***, **“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”** So there is a unity of the Spirit, there is a unity of the faith, it is not a uniformity, it is not an ecumenical unity, it is a unity, it says here, between brethren, it is organic, it is not produced by organization, it is something that we don’t all have to like the same things and have the same preferences [and I might add here, we don’t all have to have the same secondary doctrinal understandings and beliefs], it is a unity and not a uniformity. We don’t all have to dress the same, like the same music, we don’t all have to do that same things. It is a unity between brethren. And you know, any father, you know I’ve got grandkids, I love to see them getting along. I love to see them spending time with each other, I love to see them enjoying being over one another’s homes. Any father wants that. And here there is **‘Now behold, consider this,’ “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”** And look, interesting, it tells us that this is “good and pleasant,” because not all good things are pleasant. You know, if you have an abscess, or you need a root canal done, that’s good, but it’s not pleasant. There’s nothing like the smell of burning enamel, that’s something that’s good, but it’s not pleasant. There are things that are good but not pleasant. And certainly, there are things that are pleasant, but not good, from sinful things to indulgence, to eating the sixth donut in the morning, that’s pleasant but not good. So, this says, **‘Consider this, behold, think about this, observe it, this is something that is good and pleasant.’** Now, for us to be here together, to worship together, to sing praises

together, to stand together, to raise our hands sometimes together, without anybody conducting but the Holy Spirit, to see a wonderful unity, that's good and it's pleasant. And you have to be, this is a work of the Spirit. I never thought, first of all, that I would go to church three times a week, ever, let alone enjoy it, let alone raise my hands, you know, it's a work of the Spirit. So here, **“Behold, consider this, “how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”** [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/ephesians/bodyofchrist.htm> and <http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/Zephaniah1.htm> and scroll to Zephaniah 2:1-3 and read through that section.]

### *How Does David Go On To Describe This Unity?*

How good is it, how pleasant is it? He says, like this, **“it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments.”** (verse 2) And we’re going to hear now four times, there’s a descending. This is a blessing that comes down from above. **‘It’s like the precious ointment upon,’** four times, **“upon the head, that ran down”** second time, **“upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts”** is the same Hebrew word **“upon the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon”** fourth time, **“the mountains of Zion:”** so it’s a blessing that comes **on** something. **And it’s a blessing that descends.** We have that idea three times here. Look, it says in **verse 2**, **“It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down”** is the same Hebrew phrase as **“ran down,”** to the skirts of his garments.” It says **“As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended”** that’s the same phrase as **‘ran down and went down’ upon the mountains of Zion:”** the idea is, it’s something that is coming down from above. It’s a blessing that is bestowed, it comes down from above, and it comes “upon” something.

#### *1. This Unity Is Like The Holy Anointing Oil, Which Is Symbolic Of God’s Holy Spirit Descending Upon Us*

The first thing it says, he says in **verse 2**, **‘It’s like,’** he doesn’t say **‘It is,’** but he says **‘It’s like this, it’s like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.’** When the high priest was taken, and the anointing oil was poured upon his head, and it would run down, it says it ran down upon his beard, and down upon the skirts of his garment, down to the head of his garment. That unity that’s good and pleasant, it’s kind of like that, it comes down, it manifests itself. And here certainly, this was perfuse, it filled the room. We’re told in

Exodus chapter 30, beginning in verse 22, of the herbs that were used, cassia, sweet cinnamon and so forth, and no one was allowed to duplicate this [holy anointing oil]. This was only to anoint the Tabernacle and the priests. It says if anybody tried to duplicate that, they were cut off from the house of Israel. And the idea is, you know, I think in this unity, you can't fake it, you can't duplicate it, you can't make it generically, there's something real about it. And it's diffused, it's like Mary with the spikenard in the house, it says the odor filled the whole house. In ancient Israel, there was only one thing that was supposed to smell like this, that was a priest. You were supposed to know the smell of a priest, you could be walking through the marketplace and go *'sniff, I smell a priest.'* Nothing else was supposed to smell like that. And then he says the unity that there is in Christ, it's good and it's pleasant, it's like this, it's like that oil that was poured out on Aaron, that ran down, and it came from above, it descended, but it accomplished something, in that it was not static, it was diffused, it spread out, the odor of it filled, it accomplished something. And the same thing is with unity. You may not realize it, you may not realize how many people smell that on you, because we live in a world of trouble, we live in a world of bitterness, we live in a world where that's not very common at all, to turn the other cheek, to go the extra mile, Jesus said **'Blessed are the peacemakers.'** I think we have little idea sometimes how far that might really go in the judgment and measurements of others, because it says here it's something they can behold, it's observable, and it's good and it's pleasant.

## *2. This Unity Is Like The Dew That Gives Israel Its Life-giving Water, Again, Symbolic Of God's Holy Spirit Descending On Us*

Not only that, he says, it's not only like the oil that's poured out upon the head of the priest that runs down upon his garments, he says it's **"as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life evermore."** (verse 3) just over there last week, Mount Hermon had her head up in the clouds, you couldn't really see it. Most of the year round, in Israel, Mount Hermon has snow on it, at least on the northern side. You know, there's fighting in Lebanon and Syria, and there's a ski resort up the top of Mount Hermon, were the wealthy go in the middle of all the other insanity, and there's snow there almost all year-round, and the winds come south. Mount Hermon, the melting snow feeds the Jordan River, which feeds the Sea of Galilee, the largest body of fresh water in the land, it refreshes the whole land. And the dew, not very important to us, but when you live in an area that tends to be arid, it tends to be dry, that dew in the morning, coating the fresh growth of the spring and so forth, in the summer and autumn, it means

everything. It means everything to the sheep sometimes, where there's nowhere for them to drink, the dew. You know, it says **'Brethren that dwell together in unity, the goodness and pleasantness of that, that's observable, again, it precipitates and it spreads out, it touches, it refreshes, it renews, it has a, it isn't static, it has an activity attached to it.'** And sometime we don't think about it, we're so busy, we run in, we run out, here in church Sunday morning, three times, sometimes on Wednesday night, people coming in and out like the waves of the sea, and we forget sometimes, you know, the privilege that we have. We forget what it's like, I hardly remember my life BC, I'm so used to it, I take for granted, so much in common, we have worship leaders, we come, worship together, there's something wonderful that happens as we come together. People afterwards praying for one another, there's tears, there's a sweetness to it, there's something about it that, that has an odor to it that's wonderful. There isn't anything like that, that smells like that, it touches, it renews, it refreshes, there's something about it that, when we get to leave, when we leave, instead of getting beat up and mocked and picked on by all of the standards of the world, we were just together with thousands of people that believe the same thing, that love the same Lord, that have the same Spirit, a wonderful thing. And as they're coming up to Jerusalem from all the tribes of Israel, singing **"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity!"** just imagine the thousands that would come, smoke rising, the incense, the lambs being sacrificed at the Feasts, priests and the thousands of the courses of singers and musicians, how remarkable it must have been. And he said there's a wonderful sense of the nation being together, of unity for you and I as a church, it's the unity of the Spirit, the unity of the faith, and it's healing, it's consecrating, like the oil that was poured out on Aaron, it's refreshing, renewing, like the dew that settled down from the highest point in Israel, upon the mountains of Zion, all the way down towards the south.

### *Our Present Unity Of The Spirit Points To A Far Greater Unity In The Future*

And it says, **"for there the LORD has commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."** (verse 3b) Where? Where the brethren are dwelling together in unity, **"there the LORD has commanded a blessing, even life for evermore."** (verse 3) Look, it's just something that is bestowed, this unity, it's just beginning. It is just beginning. Jesus says the day is going to come, when many are going to come from the east and the west and sit down at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom, the unity that's unimaginable. It tells us in the book of Revelation that they're coming from every nation, kindred, tribe and

tongue, whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, a unity that's hardly imaginable to us, we're tasting, there's a foretaste of it now. When Jesus was at the wedding at Cana, the host of that wedding feast came to him and said, ***'It is unusual, because normally they put out the better wine first, then when everybody's well drunk, then they put out the poison afterwards. But you saved the best for last.'*** You see, the world and Satan, that's the way they do it, they put out the sweet stuff first, and sin has an appeal to it, it says there's a pleasure to it for a season, but what it yields is painful, and it's broken as time goes on. It says ***'This is very unusual, we don't see anybody operate like this, where you saved the best for last.'*** And however we enjoy being together, or worshipping the Lord here, you ain't seen nothing yet. Because he's saved the best for last, that's the way he operates. And when we get caught up to glory, and we have our first communion service [for some of us now, Christian Passover service] there, that's what we've all been waiting for [cf. Revelation 19:7-8]. I'm looking forward to that. So, this wonderful Psalm about unity, about the blessing of God, about the things that we should look to him for that come down from above, that permeate, and the unity, you know, you'll never know, in your own life, turning the other cheek, going the extra mile, taking a deep breath, and say *'Lord, for your cause, I'm going to move forward here in unity, I'm going to do this.'* But you never know how that may diffuse and refresh and renew and touch others, the implications of it are certainly eternal.

## *Psalm 134:1-3*

A Song of degrees.

***"Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion."***

And that brings us to Psalm 134, it's the shortest of the Songs of Ascent that were sung as they came up to Jerusalem, it's kind of the people were blessing the priests, and then the priests blessed the people, it's reciprocal, antithaphul, interesting picture. Let's read it, it's the shortest one. It says, ***"Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion."*** Now it seems verse 1 and 2 are the people, as they've come up now to Jerusalem, they've enjoyed the unity, their feet have stood within the gate of Jerusalem, we've been reading through these Psalms of Ascent, this seems to be the end of the first long

day of worship as everybody has come together, a song like this would have been sung. And the people saying to the priests and the Levites, **“Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.”** They were in service there, the people are saying *‘Bless the LORD now,’* it seems like they’re leaving at the end of the day, you would stand in the house of the LORD, **“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.” (verse 2)** Important to us, because it tells us we’re a kingdom of priests [cf. Revelation 5:10; 20:6], that God has made us all priests, as it were in the house of God. So, great exhortation to us here, first **“Behold, bless ye the LORD,”** we should all take that to heart, **“all ye servants of the LORD,”** that would include all of us, what we should be, his servants, **“which by night stand in the house of the LORD.” (verse 1)** you know, like I do sometimes at night, sometimes in the dark, sometimes before I fall asleep at night, the most precious times of my communion with him. **“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary,”** good thing to do. Right? Maybe when we come to the end of the study tonight, the worship team comes back, great time to lift up your hands. *‘That’s weird,’* I know it’s weird to you, it’s not weird to me, it’s not weird to most of us. Some of you it might be weird to you, I grew up in the Lutheran Church, it would have been really weird there. But you know, we’ve been with the Lord long enough, we forget about those kinds of things around us, and open our hearts and lift our hands. Look, some of us lift our hands again, it’s like saying *‘Abba, Father,’* just like one of my little grandkids comes walking over and goes like this, they want to be picked up, want to be embraced, sometimes it’s like that, *‘Abba, Father.’* Sometimes it’s surrender, and we need to surrender. Sometimes it’s *‘Stick ‘em up,’* you’re busted, *‘you’ve been doing what!?’* *‘You’re right Lord, forgive me Lord.’* Sometimes it’s just, it doesn’t matter, you know, we lift our hands to him, in all of those attitudes of heart, it’s a wonderful thing. So, the exhortation, **“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.” (verse 2)** So, for you and I, an exhortation towards the priests and Levites, at the end of the day in the Temple in Jerusalem, there would be 24 Levites, 3 priests and the captain of the guard, that would stay here all night long, and it [the Temple] was never unattended. There’s a tradition in Israel today in regards to that. I’ve been in Israel, sitting at the Wailing Wall, at 2 O’clock in the morning...it’s fun, all the limestone is hot from the sun, way away from the wall, there’s a smaller wall you go past to go pray at the Wailing Wall. And at the inside of that there’s a stone bench carved, and I’ve just sat there, this warm [wall], you look up at the moon, see the Temple Mount. At the Wall there are Orthodox Jews praying, they’re going through their routine, and I’m just sitting there thinking *‘Father, I’m not working my way into your presence at all, through the blood of Christ I so enjoy just sitting here, Lord, looking at your Creation, sitting here in the warmth of the sun that warmed up*

*these stones all day long.*’ But they have a tradition that’s interesting to watch, because of this, you never leave the Wall unattended. So if there’s one Jew there praying, it’s 2 O’clock in the morning, he’s kind of looking around, if somebody else comes up to pray, he leaves right away! Because then that guy can’t leave until somebody else comes. So it’s not like the other guy comes to pray and thinks ‘*Boy, let me pray a little longer,*’ because then he’s afraid that guy will leave before he leaves. So it’s really interesting to watch. One day there it was great, there was this cat, it was like three guys at the wall, and my friend and I, Bill, were sitting there, and there was this cat, and he had a big Praying Mantis, and he was rolling all over it, flinging it in the air, and every once in a while one of them would run, yell at him and kick at him, and he would run away, they’d go back to the wall, he’d come back with the Praying Mantis, he started rolling around again, it was just like this whole show orchestrated. I thought ‘*Father, thank you, this is wonderful, I enjoyed it tremendously.*’ It didn’t bother me at all. So, the first part of the exhortation would be, the children of Israel admonishing, encouraging, exhorting the priests and the Levites, let me read that, **verses 1 and 2**, at the end of all this, wonderful, at the end of a long day, **“Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD,”** in other words, at the end of the day we’re going to go now **“which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.”** And then they would turn to the people and say **“The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.” (verse 3)** So the last of the Songs of Ascent, and the beautiful blessings, and it would be there.

## *Psalm 135:1-21*

**“Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD. Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of God, praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is pleasant*. For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure. For I know that the LORD is great, and *that* our LORD is above all gods. Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries. Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast. *Who* sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon his servants. Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings; Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan: and gave their land *for* an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people. Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations. For**

**the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants. The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them. Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron: bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD. Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD."**

### *Introduction*

"Psalm 135, takes us now away from the Songs of Ascent, and moves, Psalm 135 is an interesting structure, the first four verses are a call to praise the LORD, and the last verses, 19 to 21 are a call to bless the LORD. So let's read through the first four verses, and you'll count the word "praise" in here five times. **"Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD. Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of God, praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant. For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure."** (verses 1-4) Then if you go down to **verse 19**, as it closes, there's five challenges then "to bless the LORD." **"Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron: bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD. Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD."** (verses 19-21) Now, between that there are a set of verses that tell why he should be praised and why he should be blessed. It begins by the way, in the Hebrew, the phrase there "praise ye the LORD," that it ends with "praise ye the LORD," those are one word, the first word and the last word of the Psalm is "*hallelujah*," it's one word. Interesting, the book ends on this Psalm.

### *'Praise The LORD For The LORD Is Good'*

As the Psalm is laid out, it begins by saying **"Praise ye the LORD, hallelujah. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD."** (verse 1) just great exhortation, we are his servants as we come together. Then he said first, **"Ye that stand in the house of the LORD,"** which would be priests and Levites, that would be the only ones allowed in the house of the LORD, **"in the courts of the house of God,"** (verses 1-2) which were the people. Look, the priests, no one with an ordination had a monopoly on praise, no one has a monopoly on praise, I mean all his children are to praise him. So, here there's an exhortation to those who stand in the house, it would be

Levites and priests, more properly to praise him. But then those also who stand in the courts of the house of God were also supposed to praise him. **“Praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.” (verse 3)** So, “praise the LORD,” the reason it gives here, “because he’s good, he’s good.” Look, circumstances don’t seem to agree with that sometimes, when there’s difficulty and brokenness in our lives. But it’s saying, the truth here is, he is good. You know, when you go to a funeral sometimes, and just so much heartache, and it is in life, death certainly one of the severest blows. And you take a deep breath and you say, *‘Well LORD I know that you love us, we know that you’re sovereign, you took someone that I loved, and I’m going to bow my knee to your wisdom, you’re going to have to speak to me LORD, because this really hurts, I don’t understand, it’s hard for me to harmonize this with the fact that you’re good, that you’re merciful, and that you’re wise, because my heart is broken. I believe, LORD, that’s not the question, it’s just I hurt so bad.’* But what it says is this, we know this, that he’s good. That’s all he can be. He can’t be anything but that. And if he’s good, and he’s eternal, that means he alone is the one who defines what is good. Because we live in a really strange world, where people tell us all kinds of things that they say are good that are rotten, that are not good at all. The world thinks, and the Supreme Court thinks, and the judiciary and the executive branch, and quote unquote the religious, whatever they are, think they have the right to decide what is good. No, if God is good and he’s eternal, he’s the only one that has the right to tell us in fact what is good. And I think, if you get your advice there, you’re usually on solid ground. So, one of the reasons we should praise the LORD is because he’s good. We should sing praises to his name, for it, his name, King James says “is pleasant”, the Hebrew says ***‘we should sing praises to his name, for it is, his name, “is lovely.”*** And again, for the Jew, no one could pronounce the Tetragrammaton, the name of the LORD, YHVH, how do you pronounce that? They would put Ya, Ho, Vay, they would get out of the YHVH, or Yahweh, but the Jew never tried to really pronounce that name. You and I can pronounce his name. You know, we see through the Old Testament, when he says “I AM that I AM,” “I’m the becoming One, I am whatever you need me to be,” “or whatever I need to be towards you,” so he’ll tell Abraham “I am Jehovah-jira, the LORD your provider.” Or he will tell Moses and the children of Israel, “I am Jehovah-rapha, I am your healer.” Or he’ll tell Gideon “I am Jehovah-shalom, the LORD your peace,” or he’ll tell David “I am the Jehovah-rapha, Jehovah-rah, the LORD your shepherd.” To Jeremiah, “I am Jehovah-sikaino, the LORD your righteousness” and to Ezekiel “I am Jehovah-shama, I am the ever-present LORD.” [all these spelled phonetically, not sure of the actual spellings]. Then he finally tells Gabriel to say to Mary and Joseph “You’ll name his name, you’ll name your son “Yeshua, from Jehovah-shua, or Yahweh-shua,” because he shall save his people from their sins, it’s “the

LORD has become our salvation.” So now we’re able to say his name, it’s Jesus, Yeshua, **‘If you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the Father, I and the Father are One.’** You know, I can sit here this evening and say **‘You know what, when we praise the LORD in his house, praise the LORD in his courts, we praise the LORD because he’s good, we sing praises unto his name, for it, his name, Jesus, Yeshua is lovely.’** Amen? It’s lovely. **“For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.” (verse 4)** Now this proves that he’s good [because he chose Jacob], it doesn’t say he tossed the dice and got Jacob, a bad deal. It says **“the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.” (verse 4)** It tells us in **Exodus 19:5, ‘that as we obey the LORD and walk with him, we will be his peculiar treasure.’** Ah, interesting, he’s chosen Jacob, the heel-catcher, the conniver, the guy whose always running something down on the LORD. Again, you see Jacob, Jacob, he comes there to Bethel, and the place where the LORD appears to him, with the angels descending and ascending on the stairway to heaven there, you look at other guys, you think if Joseph were there, or if Daniel was there, they’d have said **‘LORD! We praise you, we worship you,’** they’d have fallen down in front of him, they’d have poured their heart out there. But Jacob says **‘How do you like that!? Of all the places I could have fallen asleep, I fell asleep right at the foot of the stairway to heaven.’** He says, **‘God, this is what we’ll do, if you’ll go with me, and you’ll be with me in Haran, and you’ll keep me, and you’ll feed me, and you’ll prosper me and you’ll bless me, and keep me safe, you’ll bring me back to this place, I’ll give you ten percent.’** That’s what he said. That’s Jacob. And it says here, **‘He has chosen Jacob, he’s chosen,’** because he saw him broken, he sees the end from the beginning, he saw Israel governed of God. He know he would wrestle with him, he would limp away. It says here, **‘He hath chosen Jacob unto himself,’ “and Israel for his peculiar treasure.”**

*We Are Worshippers, It’s Just How We Are, But God Is Above All Man’s Idols, And Sovereign Over All The Earth*

Verse 5, he starts to head into the LORD’s power, in regards to the natural, verse 8 he heads into the LORD’s mercy in regards to the history of the nation, and then down in verse 13 he heads into the LORD’s glory in regards to worship. And now he’s telling us in this center section why we should praise him, which he says in the first four verses, and why we should bless him, which he says in the last three verses. So he begins to say, **verse 5, “For I know that the LORD is great, and that our LORD is above all gods.”** Notice that small “g” there, he’s above all gods, because human beings are worshippers. Whatever you give the most of your heart and thought and your time and passion to is your god. Oh I

know, we're a civilized western culture, we'd never bow down in front of an idol, but you see people in this culture worshipping all the time. We are worshippers. We never worship Ashtoreth, but people give themselves over to sexual sin and pornography. [Comment: This goddess' holiday was adopted by the Roman Catholic Church early on, to supplant the early Christian Passover. This is their holiday of Easter, which was taken from the Babylonian worship of Ishtar, along with Ishtar eggs, now Easter eggs. So yes, we do worship Ashtoreth, or Ishtar, without knowing it.] We'd never worship Moloch [or Baal], but there's been 55 million abortions in our culture. We'd never worship Bacchus, but we're out getting drunk all the time, the god of wine. We'd never bow our knees and worship a statue of Mammon, but for a lot of people money is the whole point of their whole existence and their whole life. We are worshippers, that's just how we are. We're made to do that. So it says **"For I know that the LORD is great, and that our LORD is above all gods."** (verse 5) plural, all of the things that men worship.

### *God Set Up Earth's Hydro-System*

**"Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that he did in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."** (verse 6) Whatever pleased him, whatever he pleased, that's what he did in heaven, and in the earth, in the seas, and all of the deep places. He was sovereign in his doing and his not doing, what he did and what he didn't do was all him, he's above every god. It says wonderfully, **"He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures."** (verse 7) This one verse encapsulates something the meteorologists are still working on, **"he causeth the vapours,"** evaporation **"to ascend from the ends of the earth;"** you know, just the whole hydro-system of the earth, 330 million cubic miles of water, ocean on the earth. Think of that, 330,000,000 cubic miles of water. And the evaporation from that produces 1.5 trillion tons of rain every day on the surface of the earth, 1.5 trillion tons a day on the surface of the earth. [That is God's water transfer system to keep the earth and all it's varied plant life watered, including all our crops, forests, and grasslands, and river systems.] It evaporates in such small particles, when it gets into the atmosphere, the whole process of coalescence is something that scientists are still prognosticating about, but they know that the electrical charges, the lightning has something to do with it. And the lightning and static electricity causes the coalescence, and then it turns into droplets big enough to come together and fall as rain. He says it here, **"He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; and he bringeth the wind out of his treasures."** (verse 7) This is just remarkable for this to be written in one verse, talking about our God,

how he's sovereign over everything, does all of this. [Comment: And the wind, in the last part of the verse, is part of this huge earth-watering transfer system, moving the rain clouds over the entire landscape. Wind is an essential part of this transfer system. This one verse scoops modern meteorological science by about 3,000 years.]

## *God Is Sovereign Over All History*

### *Egypt, Passover And The Exodus*

Then he says, as we look at our history, **“Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast. Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon his servants.” (verses 8-9)** Look, all a picture, he smote just the firstborn, not the second-born, not the third-born, the firstborn, there was a measure, there was mercy even in his measuring out of judgment. And he says he did this in Egypt, and broke the will of Pharaoh, brought Pharaoh to his knees, and he says he gave tokens upon Egypt, there's a picture there, of course of the Passover evening, before the Levitical Feasts are ever given, the blood being wiped on the doorposts and the lentils, those who had the blood on their doorposts, and they never read the chapter and they never watched the movie, and they didn't know who Charlton Heston was. And you have to imagine, in faith. You know, the kids hearing the screaming outside, *‘Daddy, Mommy, what's going on?’* and the father saying, *‘No, we don't have to worry, the blood of the lamb is on the outside of the door,’* *‘Well how do you know this?’* *‘Because when God says he sees the blood,’* not when we see it, not when we appreciate it, not when we understand it theologically, not when we take hold of the full implications of what it means to have the blood of the lamb, he says **‘When he sees the blood, he will pass over, when he sees it.’** [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/lamb/exodus1.html>] And of course the picture is applying the blood of Christ to our lives. When the Father sees the blood he passes over, the angel of death passes over us. Not because we have comprehended it fully, it says **‘In the ages to come we'll still be learning of his grace and his mercy.’** It says right now, **‘you and I are growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.’** It says when God, he says in that beautiful picture, **‘When I see the blood, I'll pass over,’** it says.

### *The Conquering Of Canaan*

**“Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast. Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon his servants. Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings; Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan,**

**and all the kingdoms of Canaan: and gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.” (verses 8-12)** It wasn't just bringing them out of Egypt, then it was defeating those who would stand against them. **“Sihon, king of the Amorites”** and we're going to hear about him in other places. Evidently the Amorite army, one of the most powerful armies that Israel in their pilgrimage to Canaan would encounter. God giving them a great victory. And more troubling than that, Og, king of Bashan, again we hear of him in other places throughout. We're told in Deuteronomy, when it comes to Og, that either his bedstead or his sarcophagus was over 13-foot long. So Og, as we know, one of the Rephaim, of one of the tribes of giants. Og of Bashan it tells us in the Book of Deuteronomy, there were 60 cities of the giants, up in the area of Bashan [modern-day Golan Heights to Syria]. And Og their king was over 12-foot tall, just think of that, six-foot bed, imagine two of them end to end, for this guy to lay down. And I have a photograph, which I should have brought in, of a mummified giant they found in Egypt, they have him in a wooden box standing against the back of a train car, and he's about 3-foot higher than the train car, and he's in proportion. So imagine tribes, in the 1860s archaeologists from Great Britain were in the areas of Bashan and recorded, I have a copy of it, it's a book called *The Great Cities of Bashan*, it tells us in Deuteronomy there were 60 cities of the giants in Bashan, and they talk about coming upon these communities with 20-foot ceilings, all these huge basalt stones that were moved, and they said there's pin and socket doors that you can still move the doors with your hand, the doors are 16-foot high, made out of stone. They just talk about the expedition, of course that's in Syria today, there's no place friendly to Christian archaeologists these days. But Og of Bashan, Israel encountered those armies. How do you fight a guy whose taller, 13-foot tall, like Mike Tyson? You have to practice, you have to be tiptoeing. You have one guy stabbing him in the foot, when he bends down and yells, the other guy stabs him in the eye, somebody's got to cut his Achilles tendon, you know, there must have had a whole giant-killing format. But Israel defeated the giants, with the blessing of the LORD. And they defeated these armies of giants. Not only did he bring them out of Egypt, remarkably, and then in their pilgrimage, as he does in ours, how many times has he allowed us to overcome giants [and giants of situations in our lives], how many of us were sexually abused when we grew up, how many of us come from a broken home where there was an alcoholic parent? How many of us came, and there were giants in the land, things before we came to Christ, we would never have gotten rid of, they would [things in our past, PTSD, etc.] always have had dominance over us? And we come to Jesus Christ, he's good, that's why we praise him. His name is lovely. [Mike McIntosh, the head of the Horizon Christian Fellowship denomination had literally blown his mind with drugs, was totally insane, he came to Jesus during the JESUS MOVEMENT under

Pastor Chuck Smith, and was instantly healed, had his mind restored 100 percent, a total miracle.] He controls everything in the natural, and he controls everything in history, you just look back in the history of our own lives and see how he's brought us out of darkness into light, into the kingdom of the saints, the kingdom of God. And in our journey, how many giants have fallen down in each of our lives? There are some in mine that have been brought down. How many giants have been defeated in our lives? [Louis Zamperini had severe PTSD from being beat up in a Japanese prisoner of war concentration camp for over two years, and when he came to Christ he was instantly healed. Read of his account in Laura Hillenbrand's book *Unbroken*.] **“and Og king of Bashan, and all the kings of Canaan: and gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.” (verses 11b-12)**

### *The Pursuit Of Life Is To Find The Right Master*

And then finally, his glory and worship, in contrast to all other worship, **“Thy name, O LORD. endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations.” ‘You are who you are, forever.’ “For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.” (verses 13-14)** It's not New Testament repentance the way you and I think of repentance, he doesn't have any sin to repent of. The idea is, **‘He will judge his people, and he will turn from his judgment towards them, as they repent.’** It says, **“The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.”** Now some things never change, huh, **‘the idols of the unbelieving world are silver and gold, they are the work of men's hands.’** **“They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.” (verses 15-17)** Now look, when you get to Isaiah, you have the ultimate irony, *Isaiah* says, **‘Now look, what are you guy's thinking? You go out into the woods and you cut down a tree, you drag it back to your house, you cut it into boards, you use part of it to build a table, to build a chair, you use other parts of it in the fireplace for heat, and then you take part of it, and you carve it into a little idol, and you gotta take it down to the guy who overlays it with gold or silver, and then you gotta bring it back to your house on a cart again, because it can't walk. What are you guy's thinking of? The same tree that made your table, makes the fire in your fireplace, and provides a god you bow down to and worship?’** That irony begins early and runs all way through those days, sadly, after the days of David, Hezekiah and so forth. He says here, **“For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants. The idols of the heathen”** the unbelieving world, **“are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.**

**They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.”** no ruach, no spirit, and **“They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.”** (verses 14-18) What an interesting picture it gives us here. Unbelievers, it says, really have nothing to say, because the gods they worship have mouths but don’t speak. Unbelievers, it says here, they really have nothing to say, because they don’t see clearly, because the gods they make have eyes, but they don’t see, they’re blind. So those who worship them become like them, they’re blind. They have ears, it says, the gods they make, but they don’t hear, and those who worship them become like them. So people, unbelievers, people who are worshipping things in this world instead of the True and Living God, because there’s no spirit in any of that, no breath in any of that, those people really can’t hear anything that you try to tell them, because they’re blind and they have nothing to say, to contribute. Because in the context of a spiritual world, they have ZERO on that side of the scales. They’re worshipping strictly in the physical, strictly things of the material, silver and gold, strictly their own pleasure, they find their masters. I want to get my third PhD, I want to have a house down by the shore, a house here, a house up in the mountains, I want more pornography, I want more alcohol, I want more drugs, I want more sex, all of those things become the masters of human lives, heroine, alcohol, the unimaginable toll that it takes. Human beings are not meant to be mastered by any of those things, the pursuit of life is to find the right Master, and it’s the One who stretched out his hands on a wooden cross so that we can live and be forgiven. That’s the Master. Sadly it says, you know, **‘the idols of the unbelieving world, they’re silver, they’re gold, they’re the work of men’s hands, the material, they have mouths, but they speak not, they have eyes, but they see not, they have ears, but they hear not, neither is there any breath in their mouths,’** and **“They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.”** (verse 18) because they create them in their own image and likeness. **“so is every one that trusteth in them.”**

*In Closing: “Bless Ye The LORD, Praise Ye The LORD”*

Then he comes back to you and I, we don’t have to be subject to all the things this world worships anymore, like we were for years. I was. He says now, **“Bless the LORD. O house of Israel: bless the LORD. O house of Aaron: bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD. Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.” Hallelujah** (verses 19-21) Very interesting. So, God, creator of heavens and earth, he’s chosen Zion in Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD, that’s probably a good thing for

us to do right now. You think? We should get the musicians to come and we should praise the LORD. I encourage you to read ahead, Psalm 136, antithetical Psalm, the priests would read it, **'O bless the LORD of lords,'** and the congregation would say, **'For his mercy endureth forever.'** and you're going to hear it again, **'who slew great kings, Og of Bashan, for his mercy endureth forever, who did this,'** and the congregation would say **'his mercy endureth forever.'** You only have to learn one line for next week. Ok? **'for his mercy endureth forever.'** When we get here, I'll read the priest's part, then you'll keep reading the congregation's part. Alright? So you just got it memorized. That's amazing, you got all of Psalm 136 memorized in one night. Let's stand, let's pray, read ahead...[connective expository sermon on Psalms 133:1-3; Psalm 134:1-3 and Psalm 135:1-21, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

What were the Holy Days, Feast Days of the LORD all about which these Songs of Ascent were sung, as the Israelites ascended up from the Dead Sea to Jerusalem, a 3600-foot climb? **See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/messianicmovement/Holydayshadow.s.htm>**

"How pleasant is it for brethren to dwell in unity!" What is that unity for us? see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/ephesians/bodyofchrist.htm> and <http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/Zephaniah1.htm>

"Who smote the firstborn of Egypt" see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/lamb/exodus1.html>