

## PSALMS 112 AND 113

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. We can learn much from psalms 111 and 112 by a comparison and contrast. Graham Scroggie gave a very helpful chart on this which we reproduce here:

#### PSALM CXI

1. Praise ye the Lord.
1. The upright.
10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
2. Them that delight therein.
3. His righteousness endureth for ever.
4. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.
4. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.
5. Them that fear Him.
7. His commandments.
8. Established (stand fast).

#### PSALM CXII

1. Praise ye the Lord.
2. The upright.
1. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord.
1. Delighteth greatly in His commandments.
- 3, 9. His righteousness endureth for ever.
4. He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.
6. The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.
8. He shall not be afraid.
1. His commandments.
8. Established.

2. To whom do the words: "gracious and compassionate" in vs. 4b refer? This becomes a startling thought. Why?

## PSALM 113

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

A Song of Sublime Simplicity: reaching its Climax  
by Rejoicing with a Glad Mother!

### ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-3, Praise Invited from Jehovah's Servants, for All Time, through All the World. Stanza II., vers. 4-6, Jehovah's Incomparable Loftiness and Condescension in Contrast. Stanza III., vers. 7-9, The Lowly are Exalted and the Barren Wife made Glad.

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(P.R.I.) Praise ye Yah!

1. Praise O ye servants of Jehovah,  
praise the name of Jehovah:

## STUDIES IN PSALMS

- 2 Let the name of Jehovah be blessed  
from this time forth and to the ages:
- 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going in thereof  
worthy to be praised is the name of Jehovah.
- 4 High above all nations is Jehovah,  
above the heavens is his glory
- 5 Who is like unto Jehovah our God,—  
that on high sitteth,
- 6 that down low looketh,—  
In the heavens and on the earth?
- 7 Who raiseth out of the dust the poor,  
from the dunghill<sup>1</sup> uplifteth the needy:
- 8 To seat [him] with nobles,  
with the nobles of his people.
- 9 Who giveth an abiding home to the barren of the house,  
[now] mother of the sons to her joy!  
(Nm.)<sup>2</sup>

## PARAPHRASE

### PSALM 113

- Hallelujah! O servants of Jehovah, praise His name.
- 2 Blessed is His name forever and forever.
  - 3 Praise Him from sunrise to sunset!
  - 4 For He is high above the nations; His glory is far greater  
than the heavens.
  - 5 Who can be compared with God enthroned on high?
  - 6 Far below Him are the heavens and the earth; He stoops  
to look,
  - 7 And lifts the poor from the dirt, and the hungry from  
the garbage dump,
  - 8 And sets them among princes!
  - 9 He gives children to the childless wife, so that she becomes  
a happy mother. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord.

## EXPOSITION

This is a Song of exquisite simplicity and grace. The momentary feeling that it starts with mincing steps, quickly gives place to the perception that its stairlike advances soon mount from the simple to the sublime. The *servants of Jehovah*

1. Or: "ash-heap."
2. See 114 (beginning).

## PSALM 113

are the only safe custodians of his *praise*. But, instead of keeping his praise to themselves, they are called upon to give it wing through all time and to the ends of the earth. So much already the first stanza embraces.

Jehovah is related to *all nations*, but *high above* them all: indeed, *above the heavens is his glory*—his Messengers and Ministers are far beneath him—his throne is ever above them. Even in heaven, although *he goeth high to sit*, yet he *bendeth low to look*,—which appears to settle a nice point as to the construction of the second stanza, and to intimate that even in heaven the condescension of Jehovah is recognised, and not merely here on earth. He is therefore incomparable both *in the heavens and on the earth*.

But *the dust and the dunghill* especially savour of earth. It is here that patience and hope especially need to be nursed; and silent sorrow most strongly commands our sympathy. “Depressed in spirit” was Hannah, before she became the mother of Samuel; and, in another way, more sorely tried, still, was Mary the mother of Jesus. The praises of Israel have been composed to help out the sorrows of sufferers into soothing and helpful expression; and the language of both Hannah and Mary is reflected or anticipated here, where, with striking significance, the last word is *joy!* (Cp., for the Mother City, Isaiah 60:14-22; 66:7-14).

This psalm is the first of the series called “The Hallel”—sometimes “The Egyptian Hallel”—sung on occasion of the three great national festivals, the new moons and (portions of it) at the commencement of the New Year. At the Passover, this psalm and the next were sung at the beginning of the celebration, and the remaining four psalms (115-118) after the pouring out of the “fourth” cup. That such a psalm as this should have been made the first of such a series is profoundly significant. Only to think it possible that a King wrote this psalm while waiting in patience for the birth of his Firstborn, is to catch a glimpse of Sacred Romance.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the purpose and use of this psalm?
2. There must be great benefit in praise or adoration to Jehovah. Why isn't it more prominent today?
3. Our God is both high and low. In what sense?

## STUDIES IN PSALMS

4. This is a psalm for the expectant mother. It is referred to Mary and Hannah—just how related?
5. Sacred Romance might be involved. How?

## PSALM 114

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

A Passover Song.

### ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1, 2, The Deliverance out of Egypt set forth as the Basis of Jehovah's Worship and Reign in Israel. Stanza II., vers. 3, 4, Nature's Excitement over the Birth of the Nation. Stanza III., vers. 5, 6, Nature Interrogated as to the Cause of her Excitement. Stanza IV., vers. 7, 8, The Psalmist Answers for Nature: Jacob's God is Nature's Lord.

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(P.R.I.) Praise ye Yah!

- 1 When Israel came forth out of Egypt,  
the house of Jacob from a people of unintelligible speech
- 2 Judah became his sanctuary,  
Israel his realm.
- 3 The sea saw and fled,  
the Jordan turned backward;
- 4 The mountains skipped like rams,  
the hills like the young of the flock.
- 5 What aileth thee O thou sea that thou fleest?  
thou Jordan that thou turnest backward?
- 6 Ye mountains that ye skip like rams?  
ye hills like the young of the flock?
- 7 At the presence of the Lord be in birth-throes O earth!  
at the presence of the God of Jacob:
- 8 Who turneth the rock into a pool of water,  
flint into a fountain of water.

(Nm.)

### PARAPHRASE

#### PSALM 114

Long ago when the Israeli escaped from Egypt, from that land of foreign tongue,