

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

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[0 : 00] Amen. It's been a great morning so far, and yeah, God has been with us. He's going to continue to be with us. I have the great task of trying to do this particular part of the service, the sermon, in about 10 minutes.

Let's say 12. Let's say 15. I don't know. Anyways, you know, you could be praying to the Lord, the one who can make the preacher speak shortly, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Amen. So we spent the morning reading and responding to Psalm 136, and actually I'm going to be speaking from its twin, Psalm 135, which many Bible scholars and historians believe.

Both of those songs were sung together at the closing of some of the big Jewish festivals. And so as we read the words of this psalm, I want you to imagine yourself at a feast in Jerusalem hundreds and hundreds of years ago, singing this among the throngs of people who had made their pilgrimage from around the nation of Israel, from the inheritance that God had given them. But in response to the command, they faithfully obeyed to come at certain times of the year and just party down with one another in the presence and the goodness of God, celebrating all that who he is with singing and eating and all of that stuff.

[1 : 20] And regardless, when they were coming together, regardless of whatever they were facing in their life, they were there to celebrate this God who is like no other, a God who is great and mighty, a God from whom all blessings flow.

And so Psalm 135 begins this way, praise the Lord, praise the name of the Lord, give praise, O servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good, sing to his name, for it is pleasant. The psalm begins just like Psalm 136, with a command to give praise.

It's a call to worship, and it's a call to worship that goes out to the servants of the Lord, those who get to stand in the Lord's house, in the courts of God's very dwelling place.

Consider for them what that privilege means. Consider for us what that privilege means. What gets you access to that place to be able to do that, to stand in the presence of the Almighty, the creator of the heavens and the earth?

[2 : 28] Who gets to stand in his temple, in his courts, that place where heaven touches earth? And here's what gets you access. It's only by the grace of God. It's only by his divine favor.

It goes on to say in verse four, for the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his own possession. And the story of God's people is a story about God setting his love upon his beloved. And his choosing is a mystery. But it's a mystery in which we are meant to marvel. It is a mystery that has been revealed since then in Christ, and has been broadened out to all nations and all ethnicities.

As the apostle Peter wrote to the churches, he said to them, but you, people of God, you saved ones, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him.

He called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people. Once you have not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

[3 : 40] This God from whom all blessings flow, he has chosen to set his love upon you. He called you out of darkness to show the light of the glory of his name.

What the psalmist said, man, this name that is so good, this name that is pleasant. He chose you to do that. He calls us out of the grave like Jesus did when he stood at the, at the tomb of Lazarus. We were dead just like him, incapable of doing anything, but Jesus comes and he stands at our tomb and calls us out by name. And so we come running out into his presence.

Praise the name of the Lord, the name by which we are saved, the name by which we are called. And only he can do that because he is the, all the, he is the almighty.

He gets to do what he pleases. Verse five says, for I know that the Lord is great and that our Lord is above all gods, that whatever the Lord pleases, he does in heaven and on earth and the seas and all the deeps.

[4 : 44] He, it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth. He makes lightnings for the rain and brings forth the wind from his storehouses. He, it is who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and a beast who in your midst.

Oh, Egypt sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants who struck down many nations and killed mighty kings, Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of, king of Bashan and all the kingdoms of Canaan and gave their land as a heritage, a heritage to his people, Israel.

Pause and think. The psalmist is saying, sing and consider about God's sovereignty. Before you and I give credit to anything we could do, before you and I give credit to any man, pause and consider the almighty.

Before you think to take glory for yourself in any way. What is the sovereignty of the Lord? Who can know the mind of the Lord? Who can know and understand his ways and discern them?

He controls the weather and the waves. Creation turns at his will. No man was able to stand against him nor overcome him. Anyone who sets himself up against God and against his people, ultimately they lost and ultimately they will lose.

[6 : 08] Every injustice we see here, this sovereign Lord will set right. Because salvation belongs to God alone. The almighty, the sovereign Lord in his presence, you and I get to stand.

In his presence, you and I have the privilege to be able to worship and praise. From him, all blessings flow. By his might and by his power, in the manner and the measure that pleases him. And he is worthy of our praise and our trust. Trust. Verse 13 says, Your name, O Lord, endures forever. You're renowned, O Lord, throughout all ages.

For the Lord will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants. The idols of the nations, they're silver and gold. They're the work of human hands. They have mouths but can't speak.

They have eyes but don't see. They have ears but do not hear. Nor is there any breath in their mouths. Those who make them become like them. So do all who trust in them.

[7 : 13] It says he will endure forever. He is unchanging. Be confident in this almighty God, this God of favor and grace that invites you into his courts.

Be confident that he won't weaken. He won't suddenly ghost you or suddenly disappear. You don't have to be afraid that someone else, some other principality or power will suddenly rise up to become greater than him and defeat him.

He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He will endure. And because of that, because he is unchanging, because he is almighty, because no one will ever surpass him, no one ever has, no one ever can, no one ever will, he will endure.

Place your confidence in him alone. Because it is foolish to place your confidence in anything else. Nothing else is worth such a confidence as that.

Don't put your faith in yourself. Don't put your faith in your own strength and trust in your own strength. Don't put your trust in any man's strength. Consider what man's strength has ever endured.

[8 : 23] No king or kingdom of this earth has endured. Nor have any of the idols that they worshipped. No government of man has endured.

No philosophy of man has endured. They all arrive and they all disappear. They all change. They all evolve. None endure. None stay the same forever and ever and ever.

But only one name and only one kingdom will endure forever, unchanged and unchanging. And put your trust in him.

Put your trust in that God, the God of that kingdom and he will vindicate that trust. And that vindication is that blessing that flows from him.

And so what then, my friends, is an appropriate response to our God from whom all these blessings flow? Bless him. Bless him with conviction.

[9 : 21] Bless him with recognition and honor and renown that is due his name. Bless him passionately. Don't hold back. You know, it's interesting, at the very end of this psalm, the verses

we're about to read and trying to capture the intended tone and passion, the interpreters, they added exclamation points, which, you know, the Hebrew language doesn't have.

They don't have exclamation marks. And yet, they had to do something to help us understand that these verses were written in a way to meant to evoke demonstrative, passionate, emotion-filled response.

It's the kind of thing when we come to sing these praises of our God and putting ourselves back into Jerusalem with God's people, they weren't doing this. Oh, God, you're pretty amazing.

Man, they were belting it out. They were praising this God. And so, this psalm brings us into this place. We've reached this crescendo of soaring in God's splendor, and here is our appropriate response.

Oh, house of Israel, bless the Lord. Oh, house of Aaron, bless the Lord. Oh, house of Levi, bless the Lord.

[10:34] You who fear the Lord, bless the Lord. It is leaving nobody out. Just in case you were wondering. Blessed be the Lord from Zion.

He who dwells in Jerusalem prays the Lord. As the band comes up, the psalm demands a response.

And you and I, we have a choice to make. Well, you and I, will we trust and believe in the God of this psalm, this God from whom all blessings flow? And if you're here visiting, maybe you're here, and you're not yet a follower of Jesus, you came in today wondering about this God, wondering who this Jesus is.

there is no other name by which you can be saved, my friend. In the fullness of time, it said God sent his only son. His name was Jesus. He is the only son of God, and he was the only one who came, and he came to live a life of perfect righteousness, one that you and I can never live.

And he died on a cross for our sins. They take the penalty for our sins upon himself, because our sin has to be punished by a holy God. This God, he made a way of rescue for you and for me, and so put your trust and your confidence in him and in him alone, and you will be saved.

[12:00] Now, if you're already a follower of Jesus, we're going to come to the communion table. And this communion table is a celebration. It is a celebration of all that God has done.

This meal is a feast of grace that has been given to us by a God from whom all blessings flow. He says, come to me. Eat and drink.

Food and water without price. Feast on him, it says in Isaiah 55. We get to come, and we come to this table. His body that was broken represented in the bread, the sign and the symbol of his sacrifice for you and for me.

And we get to come, we get to drink of the cup, the sign and the symbol of this blood that was shed for us on Calvary, the forgiveness and the remission of our sins. The blood of his very covenant, the blood that calls us in, and he has made a way.

As the Hebrew writer says, we get access into this holy place. Not one made with hands, but one that Christ fulfilled and is represented in the heavenly place.

[13:09] We get to go into that place where heaven touches earth, and it's through a new curtain, the curtain that is the very body of our Savior Jesus Christ, and we who are united with him and joined with him by faith in him, we get access to that.

We get to come celebrate that in communion today. And so as you come to the table, marvel at your King, Jesus Christ. Marvel at the goodness of this Father from whom all blessings flow.

Lord, I pray over our time right now as we come to your table that we would come with thankfulness, we would come with celebration, we would come knowing that you have set your favor upon us.

And nothing, nothing, no power, nor height, nor depth, nor anything in heaven and on earth can separate us from the love of God because of you, Jesus Christ.

Thank you. Amen. You can go to the table close to you, take the cup and the bread, bring it back to your seat and take it when you're ready.

[14:22] Amen. Amen. Amen.