

PSALM 111

The LORD Praised for His Goodness.

INTRODUCTION.

- A. "Praising Jehovah for His Goodness."
- B. These next three psalms are usually called Hallelujah Psalms, because of the Hebrew, Hallelujah, or "Praise the Lord [Jehovah]" at the beginning and usually at the end of each psalm. Clyde M. Miller, in the *Living Word Commentary*, says that Psa. 111,112 are both acrostics, containing 22 lines each with each line beginning with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 111 describes God as reflected in His works, and Psa. 112 the man who fears God and properly responds to Him. Some of the phraseology used in Psa. 111 to describe God is repeated in Psa. 112 to describe the God-fearing man. These psalms use some of the same incidents to illustrate God's works as some to the other historical psalms.
- C. Dummelow comments on a theme for Psa. 111: "The theme of Psalm 111 is the refrain of Psalm 107, 'Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.'"
- D. The acrostic pattern is so inflexible, there is seldom a logical order or structure for this type of psalm. It is usually a string of lines that are organized according to the first letter of the first word. Therefore, there is little that than be done with logical divisions.

THE TEXT.

111:1 Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with all *my* heart,
In the company of the upright and in the assembly.

2 Great are the works of the LORD;

They are studied by all who delight in them.

3 Splendid and majestic is His work,

And His righteousness endures forever.

4 He has made His wonders to be remembered;

The LORD is gracious and compassionate.

5 He has given food to those who fear Him;

He will remember His covenant forever.

6 He has made known to His people the power of His works,

In giving them the heritage of the nations.

7 The works of His hands are truth and justice;

All His precepts are sure.

8 They are upheld forever and ever;

They are performed in truth and uprightness.

9 He has sent redemption to His people;

He has ordained His covenant forever;

Holy and awesome is His name.

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;

A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*;

His praise endures forever.

COMMENTS.

[v1] "...in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation." These two words may be used as a synonymous parallelism, but a distinction is made in that "assembly" here refers to a group who come together for worship or instruction, and "congregation" refers to the assembled nation as at a major feast. These terms are suggestive of a national assembly for a major feast before the nation was taken to Babylon.

[v2] "The WORKS of the Lord are great..." Five times in the ten verses of this psalm, God's "works" are mentioned.

[v3] “His WORK is honorable and glorious...” The same words that describe God’s nature and characteristics, also describe His works.

[v4,5] “...He has given food to those who fear Him... mindful of His covenant.” We think of the manna that He gave them in the wilderness, but God continues to provide for our needs.

[v6] “...the power of his *works*, the heritage of the heathen.” This may be referring to the land of Canaan that He gave them by Joshua.

[v7,8] “The WORKS of His hands are verity [truth] and justice...” God’s works are like He is: faithful, true and right. “All His precepts are sure... They stand fast forever...” We can depend on what He says.

[v9] “He sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever.” God’s covenant is “forever” or for the dispensation. “...holy and awesome is his name” (NKJ). “...holy and reverend is His name” (KJV). The Hebrew word basically means “to be afraid, stand in awe, fear.”

[v10] “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...” This is a form of the same word translated “awesome” or “reverend” in the previous verse.