

Psalm 111

Evening Prayer II Sunday Week 3
Evening Prayer II Feast of the Sacred Heart

This is a meditative hymn of thanksgiving for what God has done. The acrostic form highlights the totality of God's providence [from A to Z, as we would say] and of our response of praise. Since God's covenant (verses 5 and 9) endures for ever (verses 3, 5, 8 and 9), so must our praise (verse 10). When we pray this psalm as Christians, we think of the New Covenant (Hebrews 13:20).

¹Praise YH* [Hal'êlû Yâ!]

[ס] I give thanks to YHWH with all my heart*,

You shall love YHWH your God with all your heart.

– Deuteronomy 6:5

I give you thanks, YHWH, with all my heart.

– Psalm 9:1

I will give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with all my heart.

– Psalm 86:12

[צ] in the company of the upright*, in the congregation.

² [ז] Great are the works of YHWH,

[ח] worthy of study by all who delight in them.

Their delight is in the law of YHWH, and they meditate on his law day and night.

– Psalm 1:2

³ [ח] Full of honour and majesty is his work,

[ח] and his justice* endures forever.

⁴ [ח] He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;

[ח] YHWH is gracious* and tenderly compassionate*.

⁵ [ז] He provides food for those who fear* him;

[ח] he is ever mindful of his covenant*.

For God to 'remember' is to intervene to ensure the realisation of his promise.

God remembered Noah.

– Genesis 8:1

Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land.

– Leviticus 26:42

Remember and do not break your covenant with us.

– Jeremiah 14:21

He is mindful of his covenant forever, of the word that he gave,
for a thousand generations.

– Psalm 105:8 (see Psalm 106:45)

The beginning of wisdom

⁶ [כ] He has shown his people the power of his deeds,
[ל] in giving them the heritage of the nations.

⁷ [נ] His works are according to truth and to right judgment*,
[ז] all his precepts are trustworthy.

⁸ [ט] They are established forever and ever,
[י] to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness*.

⁹ [יא] He sent redemption to his people
[יב] he has ratified his covenant* for all time.

[יג] Holy and awesome is his name.

¹⁰ [יד] The fear* of YHWH is the beginning of wisdom;

The fear of YHWH is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

– Proverbs 1:7

The fear of YHWH is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

– Proverbs 9:10

The fear of YHWH is instruction in wisdom, and humility goes before honour.

– Proverbs 15:33

Truly, the fear of YHWH, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

– Job 28:28

To fear YHWH is the beginning of wisdom.

– Sirach 1:14

[טו] all those who practise it have good understanding.

[טז] His praise endures forever.