

Psalm 113

25th Sunday Year C

Evening Prayer I Sunday Week 3 and for the following feasts:
Trinity, Sacred Heart, Christ-King, Transfiguration, All Saints, BVM, Pastors, Virgins

This is the first of the so-called Hallel Psalms (Psalms 113-118) used on the celebration of the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Dedication. It is a acclamation of praise and joy at God's 'name' (YHWH), praising God especially for raising up the poor.

You shall fear YHWH your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen.

– Deuteronomy 10:20-21

**¹Praise YH! [Hal'êlû Yâ] .
Praise, O servants of YHWH*;
praise the name of YHWH.
²Blessed* be the name of
YHWH from this time on and
forever more.
³From the rising of the sun
to its setting let the name of
YHWH be praised.**

God's personal name is kept hidden in mystery.

Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name'. But God said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face.'

– Genesis 32:29-30

A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like that of an angel of God, most awe-inspiring; I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name ... Then Manoah said to the angel of YHWH, 'What is your name, so that we may honour you when your words come true?' But the angel of YHWH said to him, 'Why do you ask my name? It is too wonderful.'

– Judges 13:6,17-18

God reveals his name to invite us into dialogue.

Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am Who I Am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'YHWH, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

– Exodus 3:13-15

YHWH descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name, 'YHWH.' YHWH passed before him, and proclaimed, 'YHWH, YHWH, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.

– Exodus 34:5-7

Who is like YHWH?

We are to enter this dialogue (we are to use God's name) respectfully:

Give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

– Psalm 86:11

The nations will fear the name of YHWH.

– Psalm 102:15

God's name is included in the name of those who worship him.

I am called by your name, YHWH, God of hosts.

– Jeremiah 15:16 (Jeremiah is 'Yirm^eyāh').

This one will say, 'I am for YHWH,' another will be called by the name of Jacob, yet another will write on the hand, 'for YHWH' and adopt the name of Israel.

– Isaiah 44:5

⁴YHWH is high above all nations, and his glory* above the heavens.

YHWH is Lord of heaven, the only real God.

YHWH will become king over all the earth; on that day YHWH will be one and his name one.

– Zechariah 14:9

Holy, holy, holy is YHWH of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

– Isaiah 6:3

⁵Who is like YHWH our God, who is seated on high,

The Hebrew for 'Who is like YHWH?' reads: 'Mī ka YHWH 'elōhēnū?'

YHWH is the Most High God ('ēl 'elyôn)

The voice of the Most High resounded.

– Psalm 18:13

Let them know that you alone, whose name is YHWH, are the Most High over all the earth.

– Psalm 83:18

You have made YHWH your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place.

– Psalm 91:9

⁶who lowers his gaze to the heavens and the earth?

YHWH looks down from heaven on us.

Thus says the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit.

– Isaiah 57:15

Look down from heaven and see, from your holy and glorious habitation. Where are your zeal and your might? The yearning of your heart and your compassion? They are withheld from me.

– Isaiah 63:15

This is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word.

– Isaiah 66:2

These final verses speak of God's action on the earth. Compare the Canticle of Hannah (1Samuel 2) and the Magnificat of Mary (Luke 1:53-53). Also the following:

He raises up the needy out of distress.
– Psalm 107:41

The children born in the time of your bereavement will yet say in your hearing: 'The place is too crowded for me; make room for me to settle.' Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has borne me these? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and put away – so who has reared these? I was left all alone – where then have these come from?'

– Isaiah 49:20-21

Sing, O barren one who did not bear; burst into song and shout, you who have not been in labour! For the children of the desolate woman will be more than the children of her that is married, says YHWH.

– Isaiah 54:1 (quoted Galatians 4:27)

In his Letter to the Philippians 2:6-11, Paul speaks of Jesus humbling himself and being raised up. Note also the following:

Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?

– James 2:5

We might reflect on the following scene:

Jesus said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'
And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

– John 19:27

⁷He raises the poor* from the dust, and lifts the needy* from the ash heap, ⁸to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people.

⁹He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise YH! [Hal'êlû Yâ] .