

August 14 Su Reading 226 — Isaiah 43:1-15, 22-28 — I Am He

- ¹ *But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.*
- ² *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.*
- ³ *For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.*
- ⁴ *Because you are precious in my eyes,
and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.*
- ⁵ *Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you.*
- ⁶ *I will say to the north, Give up,
and to the south, Do not withhold;
bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the end of the earth,*
- ⁷ *everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.”*
- ⁸ *Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes,
who are deaf, yet have ears!*
- ⁹ *All the nations gather together,
and the peoples assemble.
Who among them can declare this,
and show us the former things?
Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right,
and let them hear and say, It is true.*
- ¹⁰ *“You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD,
“and my servant whom I have chosen,
that you may know and believe me
and understand that I am he.
Before me no god was formed,
nor shall there be any after me.*
- ¹¹ *I, I am the LORD,
and besides me there is no savior.*
- ¹² *I declared and saved and proclaimed,
when there was no strange god among you;
and you are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and I am God.*
- ¹³ *Also henceforth I am he;*

*there is none who can deliver from my hand;
I work, and who can turn it back?"*

- 14 *Thus says the LORD,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
"For your sake I send to Babylon
and bring them all down as fugitives,
even the Chaldeans, in the ships in which they rejoice.*
- 15 *I am the LORD, your Holy One,
the Creator of Israel, your King."*
- 22 *"Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob;
but you have been weary of me, O Israel!*
- 23 *You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings,
or honored me with your sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with offerings,
or wearied you with frankincense.*
- 24 *You have not bought me sweet cane with money,
or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices.
But you have burdened me with your sins;
you have wearied me with your iniquities.*
- 25 *"I, I am he
who blots out your transgressions for my own sake,
and I will not remember your sins.*
- 26 *Put me in remembrance; let us argue together;
set forth your case, that you may be proved right.*
- 27 *Your first father sinned,
and your mediators transgressed against me.*
- 28 *Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary,
and deliver Jacob to utter destruction
and Israel to reviling.*

Who Is He? — Eight times in this passage, God identifies Himself clearly and repeatedly with the expression, "*I am*." First, He gives His name, Yahweh: "*For I am the LORD...*" (v. 3; also 11, 15). He is not one of other gods or even the best of them all; He is the one and only God. Next, He characterizes Himself in terms of protection and close relationship toward us: "*Fear not, for I am with you...*" (v. 5; also 13). As good parents love and protect their children, God is always with us and is watching out for our wellbeing. Twice, God declared: "*You are my witnesses*" (vv. 10, 12), and in both places, His people were to be witnesses that they understood that "*I am he*" or "*I am God*." It is not enough for us to know God; we should also make Him known. Finally, God said emphatically, "*I, I am he who blots out your transgressions...*" (v. 25). He is our Savior, our only Savior, and He is worthy to be praised.

[Because of Who You Are - YouTube](#)

Because of who You are, I give You glory.
Because of who You are, I give You praise.
Because of who You are, I will lift my voice and say,
Lord, I worship You because of who You are.
Lord, I worship You because of who You are.

— Martha Munizzi (2000)

- ¹ *“But now hear, O Jacob my servant,
Israel whom I have chosen!*
- ² *Thus says the LORD who made you,
who formed you from the womb and will help you:
Fear not, O Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen.*
- ³ *For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.*
- ⁴ *They shall spring up among the grass
like willows by flowing streams.*
- ⁵ *This one will say, ‘I am the LORD’s,’
another will call on the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, ‘The LORD’s,’
and name himself by the name of Israel.”*
- ⁶ *Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
“I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.*
- ⁷ *Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.^[fn]
Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.
Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.*
- ⁸ *Fear not, nor be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
And you are my witnesses!
Is there a God besides me?
There is no Rock; I know not any.”*

- ²¹ *Remember these things, O Jacob,
and Israel, for you are my servant;
I formed you; you are my servant;
O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.*
- ²² *I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud
and your sins like mist;
return to me, for I have redeemed you.*
- ²³ *Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it;
shout, O depths of the earth;
break forth into singing, O mountains,
O forest, and every tree in it!
For the LORD has redeemed Jacob,
and will be glorified^[fn] in Israel.*
- ²⁴ *Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer,
who formed you from the womb:*

*"I am the LORD, who made all things,
 who alone stretched out the heavens,
 who spread out the earth by myself,
 25 who frustrates the signs of liars
 and makes fools of diviners,
 who turns wise men back
 and makes their knowledge foolish,
 26 who confirms the word of his servant
 and fulfills the counsel of his messengers,
 who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be inhabited,'
 and of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be built,
 and I will raise up their ruins';
 27 who says to the deep, 'Be dry;
 I will dry up your rivers';
 28 who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd,
 and he shall fulfill all my purpose';
 saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,'
 and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'"*

ESV Footnotes

(44:7) Or *Who like me can proclaim it?*

(44:23) Or *will display his beauty*

Predictor and Director — Even after severely punishing Israel and Judah for their persistent rebellion, God expressed His great love for them. The God who had "*chosen ... made you ... [and] formed you*" (v. 1-2), "*...will help you*" (v. 2). That help would include bringing them back to the Promised Land by using Cyrus the Great "*to fulfil all my purpose*" (v. 28). God both *predicts* and *directs* history ("*...have I not told you from of old and declared it?*"—v. 8). He can do that because He is eternal ("*I am the first and I am the last*"—v. 6). More "*help*" for God's people would come later when He said, "*I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring*" (v. 3), a prediction fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18). The Apostle Paul offered a similar prediction and promise for us Christians: "*...he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ*" (Phil. 1:6). God has predicted that for those of us who are truly born again, and He will direct us to that end.

[He Who Began a Good Work In You - YouTube](#)

He who began a good work in you,
 He who began a good work in you,
 Will be faithful to complete it;
 He'll be faithful to complete it.
 He who started the work,
 Will be faithful to complete it in you.

— Jon Mohr (1987)

August 16 Tu Reading 228 — Isaiah 45:1-25 — There is No Other

1 *Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
 whose right hand I have grasped,
 to subdue nations before him
 and to loose the belts of kings,*

to open doors before him
 that gates may not be closed:
 2 "I will go before you
 and level the exalted places,^[fn]
 I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
 and cut through the bars of iron,
 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness
 and the hoards in secret places,
 that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
 the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
 4 For the sake of my servant Jacob,
 and Israel my chosen,
 I call you by your name,
 I name you, though you do not know me.
 5 I am the LORD, and there is no other,
 besides me there is no God;
 I equip you, though you do not know me,
 6 that people may know, from the rising of the sun
 and from the west, that there is none besides me;
 I am the LORD, and there is no other.
 7 I form light and create darkness,
 I make well-being and create calamity,
 I am the LORD, who does all these things.
 8 "Shower, O heavens, from above,
 and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
 let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit;
 let the earth cause them both to sprout;
 I the LORD have created it.
 9 "Woe to him who strives with him who formed him,
 a pot among earthen pots!
 Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?'
 or 'Your work has no handles'?
 10 Woe to him who says to a father, 'What are you begetting?'
 or to a woman, 'With what are you in labor?'"
 11 Thus says the LORD,
 the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed him:
 "Ask me of things to come;
 will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands?^[fn]
 12 I made the earth
 and created man on it;
 it was my hands that stretched out the heavens,
 and I commanded all their host.
 13 I have stirred him up in righteousness,
 and I will make all his ways level;
 he shall build my city
 and set my exiles free,
 not for price or reward,"
 says the LORD of hosts.

14 *Thus says the LORD:
“The wealth of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush,
and the Sabeans, men of stature,
shall come over to you and be yours;
they shall follow you;
they shall come over in chains and bow down to you.
They will plead with you, saying:
‘Surely God is in you, and there is no other,
no god besides him.’”*

15 *Truly, you are a God who hides himself,
O God of Israel, the Savior.*
16 *All of them are put to shame and confounded;
the makers of idols go in confusion together.*
17 *But Israel is saved by the LORD
with everlasting salvation;
you shall not be put to shame or confounded
to all eternity.*

18 *For thus says the LORD,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it
(he established it;
he did not create it empty,
he formed it to be inhabited!):
“I am the LORD, and there is no other.*
19 *I did not speak in secret,
in a land of darkness;
I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,
‘Seek me in vain.’^[fn]
I the LORD speak the truth;
I declare what is right.*

20 *“Assemble yourselves and come;
draw near together,
you survivors of the nations!
They have no knowledge
who carry about their wooden idols,
and keep on praying to a god
that cannot save.*
21 *Declare and present your case;
let them take counsel together!
Who told this long ago?
Who declared it of old?
Was it not I, the LORD?
And there is no other god besides me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none besides me.*

22 *“Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!*

- For I am God, and there is no other.*
- 23 *By myself I have sworn;
from my mouth has gone out in righteousness
a word that shall not return:
'To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear allegiance.'* ^[fn]
- 24 *"Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me,
are righteousness and strength;
to him shall come and be ashamed
all who were incensed against him.*
- 25 *In the LORD all the offspring of Israel
shall be justified and shall glory."*

ESV Footnotes

(45:2) Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scroll, Septuagint *level the mountains*

(45:11) A slight emendation yields *will you question me about my children, or command me concerning the work of my hands?*

(45:19) Hebrew *in emptiness*

(45:23) Septuagint *every tongue shall confess to God*

Uniquely Named — The future powerful leader, Cyrus the Great, was named by God through the writings of Isaiah (v. 1), 150 years before Cyrus was born. How unique is that?! This demonstrates God's omniscience (all-knowingness) and His sovereignty (supremely-ruling). The Lord predicted the rise of Cyrus to great power for this reason: *"that you may know that it is I, the LORD ... who call you by your name"* (v. 3). God's purpose was evangelistic: He wanted Cyrus to acknowledge and know Him. That purpose extended even beyond Cyrus, because God's prediction was also given and fulfilled widely *"that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other"* (v. 6). That introduces the other name emphasized in this chapter, the name of God (*"the LORD"*), Yahweh. He is absolutely unique. Six times in this passage, that uniqueness is highlighted with statements like this: *"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God"* (v. 5; cf. vv. 6, 14, 18, 21, 22). Yahweh (or Jehovah) is the name above all names, the name at which *"every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth"* (Phil. 2:10)—the name of Jehovah-Jesus.

[Every Knee Shall Bow - YouTube](#)

As the sun rises in the east,
So He shall split the eastern sky,
Sword in hand upon the mountain,
Fire of heaven in His eye.

And every knee shall bow.
Every knee shall bow;
We kneel before Him now.

— Twila Paris (1991)

August 17 W Reading 229 — Isaiah 46:1-13 — Declaring the End from the Beginning

- ¹ *Bel bows down; Nebo stoops;
their idols are on beasts and livestock;*

- these things you carry are borne
as burdens on weary beasts.*
- 2 *They stoop; they bow down together;
they cannot save the burden,
but themselves go into captivity.*
- 3 *“Listen to me, O house of Jacob,
all the remnant of the house of Israel,
who have been borne by me from before your birth,
carried from the womb;*
- 4 *even to your old age I am he,
and to gray hairs I will carry you.
I have made, and I will bear;
I will carry and will save.*
- 5 *“To whom will you liken me and make me equal,
and compare me, that we may be alike?*
- 6 *Those who lavish gold from the purse,
and weigh out silver in the scales,
hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god;
then they fall down and worship!*
- 7 *They lift it to their shoulders, they carry it,
they set it in its place, and it stands there;
it cannot move from its place.
If one cries to it, it does not answer
or save him from his trouble.*
- 8 *“Remember this and stand firm,
recall it to mind, you transgressors,*
- 9 *remember the former things of old;
for I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me,*
- 10 *declaring the end from the beginning
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, ‘My counsel shall stand,
and I will accomplish all my purpose,’*
- 11 *calling a bird of prey from the east,
the man of my counsel from a far country.
I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass;
I have purposed, and I will do it.*
- 12 *“Listen to me, you stubborn of heart,
you who are far from righteousness:*
- 13 *I bring near my righteousness; it is not far off,
and my salvation will not delay;
I will put salvation in Zion,
for Israel my glory.”*

Knowing and Acting — Babylon had conquered Jerusalem, and many of the people of Israel had been exiled in punishment for their persistent rebellion against God. They had drifted into idolatry. So, through Isaiah, God challenged “*all the remnant*” (v. 3), who were still in the Promised Land, to consider what their idolatry had accomplished for them. Nothing! They carried idols while God

carried them (v. 4). Do we sometimes trust in people, government, circumstances, intellect, cleverness, etc., instead of trusting in the loving God who carries us? Does God really care for us? Is He really in control? That must have been what those Israelites thought, because God urged them to “*remember the former things of old*” (v. 9a). Look at the history! God showed Himself to be loving and powerful to Israel for centuries. He was active on their behalf. The next verse shows that God was also all-knowing, “*declaring the end from the beginning*” (v. 10a). Then, God not only *knows* the future, but He also *directs* the future: “*I will accomplish all my purpose*” (v. 10b). He knows everything and He can do anything He decides to do.

God Omniscient, God All-Knowing - YouTube

God omniscient, God all-knowing,
In his wisdom does ordain
Every working of creation
to the glory of His name.
Who His thoughts can dare to fathom?
Who His judgments can contain?
None His equal, unassailable,
He our God who ever reigns.

— Matt Boswell (b. 1979)

August 18 Th Reading 230 — Isaiah 48:1-22 — For My Own Sake

- 1 *Hear this, O house of Jacob,
who are called by the name of Israel,
and who came from the waters of Judah,
who swear by the name of the LORD
and confess the God of Israel,
but not in truth or right.*
- 2 *For they call themselves after the holy city,
and stay themselves on the God of Israel;
the LORD of hosts is his name.*
- 3 *“The former things I declared of old;
they went out from my mouth, and I announced them;
then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass.*
- 4 *Because I know that you are obstinate,
and your neck is an iron sinew
and your forehead brass,*
- 5 *I declared them to you from of old,
before they came to pass I announced them to you,
lest you should say, ‘My idol did them,
my carved image and my metal image commanded them.’*
- 6 *“You have heard; now see all this;
and will you not declare it?
From this time forth I announce to you new things,
hidden things that you have not known.*
- 7 *They are created now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them,
lest you should say, ‘Behold, I knew them.’*

- 8 *You have never heard, you have never known,
from of old your ear has not been opened.
For I knew that you would surely deal treacherously,
and that from before birth you were called a rebel.*
- 9 *“For my name’s sake I defer my anger,
for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you,
that I may not cut you off.*
- 10 *Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tried^[fn] you in the furnace of affliction.*
- 11 *For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it,
for how should my name^[fn] be profaned?
My glory I will not give to another.*
- 12 *“Listen to me, O Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called!
I am he; I am the first,
and I am the last.*
- 13 *My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them,
they stand forth together.*
- 14 *“Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him;
he shall perform his purpose on Babylon,
and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.*
- 15 *I, even I, have spoken and called him;
I have brought him, and he will prosper in his way.*
- 16 *Draw near to me, hear this:
from the beginning I have not spoken in secret,
from the time it came to be I have been there.”
And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit.*
- 17 *Thus says the LORD,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
“I am the LORD your God,
who teaches you to profit,
who leads you in the way you should go.*
- 18 *Oh that you had paid attention to my commandments!
Then your peace would have been like a river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea;*
- 19 *your offspring would have been like the sand,
and your descendants like its grains;
their name would never be cut off
or destroyed from before me.”*
- 20 *Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea,
declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it,
send it out to the end of the earth;
say, “The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob!”*

21 *They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts;
he made water flow for them from the rock;
he split the rock and the water gushed out.*

22 *“There is no peace,” says the LORD, “for the wicked.”*

ESV Footnotes

(48:10) Or *I have chosen*

(48:11) Hebrew lacks *my name*

Old Testament Trinity — There are many things mentioned in this chapter about who God is and what He does: He is “*the God of Israel; the LORD of hosts*” (v. 2); He prophesies, displaying His omniscience and sovereignty, and declaring things “*before they came to pass*” (v. 5); He does everything “*for my own sake ... [because] My glory I will not give to another*” (v. 11); He is the Creator of all things in heaven and earth (v. 13); He uses kings to accomplish His purposes (vv. 14-15); He is the Redeemer who teaches and leads (v. 17). But another thing about God that stood out to me in this chapter is an apparent reference to the Trinity: “*And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit*” (v. 16b). The “*me*” is not identified in this verse but the context of this section of Isaiah’s prophecy has many references to the future “*my servant*” (e.g., 42:1), One who will also be emphasized in our reading when we get to the next chapter in Isaiah. If this “*me*” is referring to the Messiah, then we have the Father (“*the Lord GOD*”), the Son (“*sent me*”), and the Spirit (“*his Spirit*”) in this single verse. That is unusual for the Old Testament. Blessed Trinity.

[O Triune God - YouTube](#)

O triune God, enthroned on high,
All saints and angels, awestruck, cry,
And earth sings back in glad reply:
Alleluia!

— Geneveive Glen (b. 1945)

August 19 F Reading 231 — Psalm 46:1-11 — A Mighty Fortress

To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamo^[fn]. A Song.

- 1 *God is our refuge and strength,
a very present^[fn] help in trouble.*
- 2 *Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,*
- 3 *though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah*
- 4 *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.*
- 5 *God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.*
- 6 *The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.*
- 7 *The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

- 8 *Come, behold the works of the LORD,
how he has brought desolations on the earth.*
- 9 *He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the chariots with fire.*
- 10 *“Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!”*
- 11 *The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

ESV Footnotes

(46:1) Probably a musical or liturgical term

(46:1) Or *well proved*

Protection and Peace — At the end of two sections of this psalm, we see this theme-statement: “*The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress*” (vv. 7, 11). First, this psalm shows us that God is a fortress of *protection* (“*our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble*”—v. 1). Notice that He is our help “*in trouble*,” not necessarily “*from*” trouble. So, when we find ourselves in trouble, we should turn to God. Many years ago, I was driving with my family in a mountainous area. There was a pickup truck in front of us filled with children and young teens in the open bed. As we were going down a long slope, the truck driver tried to slow down using his brakes, but the truck started fish-tailing, throwing the children back and forth. It was dangerous. It was desperate. That is when I heard the world’s shortest prayer, coming from my wife: “Jesus...!” She didn’t even include “...Help!” Just then, the driver saw an area off to the right side of the road where a hill sloped up. He headed for it and the truck was able to stop with no accident or injuries. Then we all said, “Thank you, Lord!” He is our “*ever present help in trouble*.” This psalm also says that He is a fortress of *peace*: He is “*a river whose streams make glad the city of God*” (v. 4), and “*He makes wars cease...*” (v. 9a). Therefore, the concluding instruction to us is this: “*Be still, and know that I am God*” (v. 9b). Be still ... be safe! We can live in peace because God is our protection.

[When Peace Like a River - YouTube](#)

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

— Horatio Gates Spafford (1873)

August 20 Sa Reading 232 — Psalm 135:1-21 — Praise the Name of the LORD

- 1 *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!*
- 3 *Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good;
sing to his name, for it is pleasant! ^[fn]*
- 4 *For the LORD has chosen Jacob for himself,
Israel as his own possession.*

- 5 *For I know that the LORD is great,
and that our Lord is above all gods.*
- 6 *Whatever the LORD pleases, he does,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all deeps.*
- 7 *He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth,
who makes lightnings for the rain
and brings forth the wind from his storehouses.*
- 8 *He it was who struck down the firstborn of Egypt,
both of man and of beast;*
- 9 *who in your midst, O Egypt,
sent signs and wonders
against Pharaoh and all his servants;*
- 10 *who struck down many nations
and killed mighty kings,*
- 11 *Sihon, king of the Amorites,
and Og, king of Bashan,
and all the kingdoms of Canaan,*
- 12 *and gave their land as a heritage,
a heritage to his people Israel.*
- 13 *Your name, O LORD, endures forever,
your renown,^[fn] O LORD, throughout all ages.*
- 14 *For the LORD will vindicate his people
and have compassion on his servants.*
- 15 *The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.*
- 16 *They have mouths, but do not speak;
they have eyes, but do not see;*
- 17 *they have ears, but do not hear,
nor is there any breath in their mouths.*
- 18 *Those who make them become like them,
so do all who trust in them.*
- 19 *O house of Israel, bless the LORD!
O house of Aaron, bless the LORD!*
- 20 *O house of Levi, bless the LORD!
You who fear the LORD, bless the LORD!*
- 21 *Blessed be the LORD from Zion,
he who dwells in Jerusalem!
Praise the LORD!*

ESV Footnotes

(135:3) Or *for he is beautiful*

(135:13) Or *remembrance*

Praise and Bless — Nineteen times in these 21 verses, the name of “*the LORD*” (*Yahweh*) is used. Four times in the first three verses, we are told to “*praise the LORD*” (Hebrew: *hallelu-yah*). Then, in the last three verses, we are told to “*bless the LORD*.” How is “praising” different from “blessing” the Lord? Since the Hebrew word for “bless” is sometimes translated “kneel” (e.g., Psa. 95:6), this

activity might be thought of in a more physical way, i.e., being humble and submissive in the presence of a superior. On the other hand, the Hebrew word for “*praise*” is somewhat connected to “light,” so we might think of this activity as pointing the spotlight on someone of importance. Since this focus of attention is very often presented in Scripture in a verbal context, we might think of praising in terms of what we say (our expression toward God), and blessing in terms of what we feel (our attitude toward God). We are to do both—recognize and express our appreciation for who God is and what He does.

[Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens Adore Him - YouTube](#)

Worship, honor, glory, blessing,
Lord, we offer unto Thee;
Young and old, Thy praise expressing,
In glad homage bend the knee.
All the saints in heav'n adore Thee,
We would bow before Thy throne;
As Thine angels serve before Thee,
So on earth Thy will be done.

— Anonymous (1796)