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PSALM 33: 1 Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous! Praise is fitting for the upright.

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The Lord is praised for his works of creation, Psa 33:1-9; and for the stability of his own counsels, Psa 33:10, Psa 33:11. The blessedness of the people who have the knowledge of the true God, his grace, and providence, Psa 33:12-15. The vanity of all earthly dependence, Psa 33:16, Psa 33:17. The happiness of them that fear God, and trust in his mercy, Psa 33:18-22.

This Psalm has no title in the Hebrew and it was probably written on no particular occasion, but was intended as a hymn of praise in order to celebrate the power, wisdom, and mercy of God. Creation and providence are its principal subjects; and these lead the psalmist to glance at different parts of the ancient Jewish history. In eight of Kennicott's MSS., this Psalm is written as a part of the preceding.

#### Verse 1

Rejoice in the Lord - It is very likely that the last verse of the preceding Psalm was formerly the first verse of this. As this Psalm has no title, the verse was the more easily separated. In the preceding Psalm we have an account of the happiness of the justified man: in this, such are taught how to glorify God, and to praise him for the great things he had done for them.

Praise is comely for the upright - It is right they should give thanks to Him, who is the fountain whence they have received all the good they possess and thankfulness becomes the lips of the upright.

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PSALM 33: 2 Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre. Sing praises to him with the harp of ten strings.

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#### Verse 2

Praise the Lord with harp - כנור kinnor; probably something like our harp: but Calmet thinks it the ancient testudo, or lyre with three strings.

The psalter - נבל nebel. Our translation seems to make a third instrument in this place, by rendering עשור asor, an instrument of ten strings; whereas they should both be joined together, for נבל עשור nebel-asor signifies the nebal, or nabla, with ten strings, or holes. Calmet supposes this to have resembled our harp. In one of Kennicott's MSS., this Psalm begins with the second verse.

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PSALM 33: 3 Sing to him a new song. Play skilfully with a shout of joy!

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#### Verse 3

Sing unto him a new song - Do not wear out the old forms: fresh mercies call for new songs of praise and gratitude.

Play skilfully with a loud noise - Let sense and sound accompany each other; let the style of the music be suited to the words. This skill is possessed by few singers. They can make a loud noise, but they cannot adapt sound to sense.

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PSALM 33: 4 For the LORD's word is right. All his work is done in faithfulness.

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Verse 4

The word of the Lord is right - He is infinitely wise, and can make no mistakes; and all his works are done in truth. All the words, laws, promises, and threatenings of God are perfectly true and just. The dispensations of his providence and mercy are equally so. When he rewards or punishes, it is according to truth and justice.

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PSALM 33: 5 He loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of the loving kindness of the LORD.

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Verse 5

He loveth righteousness - What he delights in himself, he loves to see in his followers.

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord - To hear its worthless inhabitants complain, one would think that God dispensed evil, not good. To examine the operation of his hand, every thing is marked with mercy and there is no place where his goodness does not appear. The overflowing kindness of God fills the earth. Even the iniquities of men are rarely a bar to his goodness: he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain upon the just and the unjust.

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PSALM 33: 6 By the LORD's word, the heavens were made; all their army by the breath of his mouth.

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Verse 6

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made - This is illustrated in the Psa 33:9 verse: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." This evidently refers to the account of the creation, as it stands in the first chapter of Genesis.

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PSALM 33: 7 He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap. He lays up the deeps in storehouses.

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Verse 7

He gathereth the waters of the sea together - He separated the water from the earth and, while the latter was collected into continents, islands, mountains, hills, and valleys, the former was collected into one place, and called seas; and by his all-controlling power and providence the waters have

been retained in their place, so that they have not returned to drown the earth: and he has so adapted the solar and sonar influence exerted on the waters, that the tides are only raised to certain heights, so that they cannot overflow the shores, nor become dissipated in the atmospheric regions. In this one economy there is a whole circle of science. The quantity of matter in the sun, moon, and in the earth, are all adjusted to each other in this astonishing provision: the course of the moon, and the diurnal and annual revolutions of the earth, are all concerned here; and so concerned, that it requires some of the nicest of the Newtonian calculations to ascertain the laws by which the whole is affected.

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PSALM 33: 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

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#### Verse 8

Let all the earth fear the Lord - He who has thus bound, can unloose; he who has created, can destroy. He has promised life and prosperity only to the godly; let the ungodly stand in awe of him.

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PSALM 33: 9 For he spoke, and it was done. He commanded, and it stood firm.

PSALM 33: 10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing. He makes the thoughts of the peoples to be of no effect.

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#### Verse 10

The counsel of the heathen to naught - This appears to be similar to what is mentioned in the second Psalm; the useless attempts of the Gentiles to prevent the extension of the kingdom of Christ in the earth: and it may refer to similar attempts of ungodly nations or men to prevent the promulgation of the Gospel, and the universal dissemination of truth in the world.

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PSALM 33: 11 The counsel of the LORD stands fast forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

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#### Verse 11

The counsel of the Lord - What he has determined shall be done. He determined to make a world, and he made it; to create man, and he created him. He determined that at a certain period God should be manifested in the flesh, and it was so; that he should taste death for every man, and he did so; that his Gospel should be preached in all the world; and behold it has already nearly overrun the whole earth. All his other counsels and thoughts, which refer to the future, shall be accomplished in their times.

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PSALM 33: 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen for his own inheritance.

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**Verse 12**

Blessed is the nation - O how happy is that nation which has יהוה Jehovah for its אלהים Elohim; the self-existent and eternal Lord for its covenant God; one who should unite himself to it by connections and ties the most powerful and endearing! The word אלהים Elohim, which we translate God, refers to that economy in which God is manifested in the flesh.

The people whom he hath chosen - The Jews, who were elected to be his heritage, whom he preserved as such for two thousand years, and whom he has reprobated because of their unbelief and rebellion, and elected the Gentiles in their place.

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PSALM 33: 13 The LORD looks from heaven. He sees all the sons of men.

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**Verse 13**

The Lord looketh from heaven - This and the following verse seem to refer to God's providence. He sees all that is done in the earth, and his eye is on all the children of men.

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PSALM 33: 14 From the place of his habitation he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth,

PSALM 33: 15 he who fashions all of their hearts; and he considers all of their works.

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**Verse 15**

He fashioneth their hearts alike - He forms their hearts in unity; he has formed them alike; they are all the works of his hands: and he has formed them with the same powers, faculties, passions, etc.; body and spirit having the same essential properties in every human being.

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PSALM 33: 16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an army. A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

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**Verse 16**

There is no king saved by the multitude of a host - Even in the midst of the most powerful and numerous army, no king is in safety unless he have God's protection. A king is but a man, and may as easily lose his life as one of his common soldiers.

A mighty man is not delivered by much strength - There are times in which his might can be of no avail to him: and unless the mighty, the wise, the honorable, etc., have the protection of God, there is no time in which their might may not be turned into weakness, their wisdom into folly, and their dignity into disgrace.

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PSALM 33: 17 A horse is a vain thing for safety, neither does he deliver any by his great power.

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Verse 17

A horse is a vain thing for safety - Even the horse, with all his fleetness, is no sure means of escape from danger: the lion or the tiger can overtake him or he may stumble, fall, and destroy his rider.

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PSALM 33: 18 Behold, the LORD's eye is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his loving kindness;

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Verse 18

Behold, the eye of the Lord - Though all the above are unavailing, yet here is one thing that can never fail; "the eye of the Lord" - the watchful providence of the Most High, "is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy."

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PSALM 33: 19 to deliver their soul from death, to keep them alive in famine.

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Verse 19

To deliver their soul from death - To watch over and protect them in all sudden dangers and emergencies, so that they shall not lose their Lives by any accident.

And to keep them alive in famine - Not only prevent sudden death by an instantaneous interposition of my power, but keep them from a lingering death, by extraordinary supplies granted them in an extraordinary manner; because I am all in all, and all everywhere.

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PSALM 33: 20 Our soul has waited for the LORD. He is our help and our shield.

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Verse 20

Our soul waiteth - Our whole life is employed in this blessed work; we trust in nothing but him; neither in multitudes of armed men, nor in natural strength, nor in the fleetest animals, nor in any thing human: we trust in Him alone "who is our help and our shield."

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PSALM 33: 21 For our heart rejoices in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

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Verse 21

For our heart shall rejoice in him - Here is the fruit of our confidence: our souls are always happy, because we have taken God for our portion.

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PSALM 33: 22 Let your loving kindness be on us, LORD, since we have hoped in you.

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Verse 22

Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us - We cannot abide in this state unless upheld by thee; and, as we disclaim all merit, we seek for a continuance of thy mercy, and this we cannot expect but in a continual dependence on thee. "Let thy mercy, O Lord be upon us, according as we hope in thee."