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PSALM 113: 1 Praise the LORD! Praise, you servants of the LORD, praise the LORD's name.

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An exhortation to bless God for his own excellencies, Psa 113:1-6; and for his great mercy to the poor and necessitous, Psa 113:7-9. Psa 113:1-9, Psa 114:1-8, 115, 116, Psa 117:1-2, and 118, form the great Hallel, and were sung by the Jews on their most solemn festivals, and particularly at the passover. To these reference is made by the evangelists, Mat 26:30, and Mar 14:26, there called the hymn which Jesus and his disciples sung at the passover, for the whole of the Psalms were considered as one grand hymn or thanksgiving. It was probably composed after the return from the captivity. It has no title but Hallelujah in the Hebrew and ancient Versions.

Verse 1

Praise, O ye servants - Probably an address to the Levites. The Anglo-Saxon has praise the Lord, ye knaves. Knapa or knave signified among our ancestors a servant; sometimes a male, a young man.

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PSALM 113: 2 Blessed be the LORD's name, from this time forward and forever more.

PSALM 113: 3 From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, The LORD's name is to be praised.

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Verse 3

From the rising of the sun - From morning to evening be always employed in the work. Or it may be a call on all mankind to praise God for his innumerable mercies to the human race. Praise him from one end of the world unto the other. And therefore the psalmist adds,

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PSALM 113: 4 The LORD is high above all nations, his glory above the heavens.

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Verse 4

The Lord is high above all nations - He governs all, he provides for all; therefore let all give him praise.

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PSALM 113: 5 Who is like the LORD, our God, who has his seat on high,

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Verse 5

Who is like unto the Lord - Those who are highly exalted are generally unapproachable; they are proud and overbearing; or so surrounded with magnificence and flatterers, that to them the poor have no access; but God, though infinitely exalted, humbleth himself to behold even heaven itself, and much more does he humble himself when he condescends to behold earth and her inhabitants;

(Psa 113:6). But so does he love his creatures that he rejoices over even the meanest of them to do them good.

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PSALM 113: 6 Who stoops down to see in heaven and in the earth?

PSALM 113: 7 He raises up the poor out of the dust. Lifts up the needy from the ash heap;

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Verse 7

He raiseth up the poor - The poorest man, in the meanest and most abject circumstances, is an object of his merciful regards. He may here allude to the wretched state of the captives in Babylon, whom God raised up out of that dust and dunghill. Others apply it to the resurrection of the dead.

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PSALM 113: 8 that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.

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Verse 8

With the princes - נְדִיבִים nede bim, very properly translated by the Anglo-Saxon, the aldermen, the most respectable of his people.

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PSALM 113: 9 He settles the barren woman in her home, as a joyful mother of children.

Praise the LORD!

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Verse 9

He maketh the barren woman to keep house - This is a figure to point out the desolate, decreasing state of the captives in Babylon, and the happy change which took place on their return to their own land. These are nearly the words of Hannah, 1Sam 2:5.