

Psalm 111: The Great Works of the Lord

By Bob Young

I want to make Psalm 111 one of your favorites!

Psalm 111-119 make up a section of praise psalms, introduced by a focus on God's works (111) and concluded with a focus on God's word (119). Psalm 111 and Psalm 112 precede a section of the Psalms known as the Egyptian Hallel (praise psalms, Psalms 113-118). Psalm 111 describes God's work with a focus on God; Psalm 112 describes God's work with a focus on God's faithful follower. Psalm 119 provides a cap to this mini-section, coming immediately before the Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134).

Psalm 111 and Psalm 112 are alphabetic acrostics, but the acrostic advances by half-lines instead of full lines. How can psalms with only 10 verses be acrostics based on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet? Both psalms are constructed in the same way. The first verse has three half lines as does the last verse. This means that the first and last verses have six half-lines. The other eight verses contain the normal two lines—thus 16 half lines, making a total of 22 half lines. Each half line begins with the succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

The first verse of Psalm 111 introduces the theme—the praise of the Lord is to be shared with other believers. Remember and giving witness to His wisdom and understanding generates praise. God's wisdom and understanding are most clearly seen in his works, described in the next eight verses (vv. 2-9).

- His works are great—believers delight in them and contemplate them again and again.
- His forever work is full of splendor and majesty—evidence of his enduring righteousness.
- His wonderful works are so memorable that they cannot be forgotten—nor can one forget that He is gracious and merciful.
- His work includes provision for all who worship him—he remembers and never forgets his covenant.
- His powerful work is seen by his people who have witnessed the expansion of his inheritance into all of the nations of the world.
- His works are faithful and just—more evidence that all his words are trustworthy.
- His works are established and can never be undone—he will do what he has promised faithfully and consistently.
- He redeemed his people and put in place his forever covenant.

Worshiping the holy, awesome God is wisdom and evidence of good understanding. May his praise never cease!

When God's people come together, we give thanks. Why do we give thanks? God's works are great! Those who delight in God's actions study them carefully and talk about them constantly. God's works are evidence that he is praiseworthy. God's works are full of splendor and majesty, evidence of his righteousness, wonder, power, grace, mercy, justice, and faithfulness. Can we see?

For Israel, God's greatest work was their deliverance from Egypt, but God wanted them to honor the fact that he was present among them in other ways as well. For Christians, the great evidence of God's action is our redemption, but God is at work in our lives every day. When and where have you seen God during the past week? Will you look for him more intently in the week ahead?

Prayer (based on Psalm 111)

With all of our heart, we extol you, our Heavenly Father. We declare your majesty among all who will hear, because your works are great, because you compassionately and graciously provide for those who worship you, and you remember forever your covenant. We extol you because of your powerful works, because in your faithfulness and justice you redeem your people, and you have established your covenant forever. We extol you because you are holy and to you belongs eternal praise, through Jesus, Amen.

Note: You will find more devotional guides to assist in reading the Psalms on my website:

http://www.bobyoungresources.com/devotionals/ot-psalms_107-150.htm#ps111

Psalm 112: The Righteous Will Never be Moved

By Bob Young

I want to make Psalm 112 one of your favorites! I want Psalms 111-119 to be one of the sections of the Psalms that you know very well.

Psalm 111-119 make up a section of praise psalms, introduced by a focus on God's works (111) and concluded with a focus on God's word (119). Psalm 111 and Psalm 112 precede a section of the Psalms known as the Egyptian Hallel (praise psalms, Psalms 113-118). Psalm 111 describes God's work with a focus on God; Psalm 112 describes God's work with a focus on God's faithful follower. Psalm 119 provides a cap to this mini-section, coming immediately before the Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134).

Psalm 111 and Psalm 112 are alphabetic acrostics, but the acrostic advances by half-lines instead of full lines. How can psalms with only 10 verses be acrostics based on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet? Both psalms are constructed in the same way. The first verse has three half lines as does the last verse. This means that the first and last verses have six half-lines. The other eight verses contain the normal two lines—thus 16 half lines, making a total of 22 half lines. Each half line begins with the succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Psalm 112 is a eulogy to the godly person: blessed is the man who fears the LORD. This theme first appears in the Psalm 1. Thus, Psalm 112 reminds one of Psalm 1, but is constructed in parallel to Psalm 111. The expected antithesis comes in the last verse (v. 10) with a summary of the experience of the wicked man in contrast to the experience of the godly man who is exalted in the psalm. Blessed is the one who delights in the commands of the Lord! The middle eight verses of Psalm 112 naturally divide into two sections of four verses each.

Verses 2-5 pronounces blessings on the righteous.

- His descendants will be mighty, his generations blessed.
- He will dwell in wealthy and riches, with enduring righteousness.
- Darkness will become light because he is upright; constantly gracious, merciful and righteous.
- Things go well for him because he is generous and just.

Verses 6-9 speak of the results.

- The righteous will never be dislodged, and that faithfulness will be remembered forever.
- The godly person does not fear receiving bad news because he firmly trusts in the Lord.
- His heart is unswerving and without fear, believing always that he will triumph over the adversary.
- Because he has freely given to the poor, his righteousness is forever; men exalt goodness and the righteous are honored.

Prayer (based on Psalm 112)

Dear God, help us find more and more delight in your commands. We claim your promises for those who fear you – bless our children, make us righteous, develop within our hearts your graciousness and compassion. We seek to be just; we desire to be steadfast. Because we trust in you, we rest securely as we face each day. Thank you for all you have done, are doing, and will do for us, through Jesus we pray, Amen.

You can find additional helps for reading the Psalms devotionally at the following link:

http://www.bobyongresources.com/devotionals/ot-psalms_107-150.htm#ps112