

## PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

### Psalm One Hundred And Thirty-Five - A Psalm To Encourage Upright Living Amidst Laboriously Evil Times (Psalm 135:1-21)

#### I. Introduction

- A. When much injustice and oppression exists in the world and in our own personal experiences, it can seem hard for us to believe that God is in control, or that He is really good as we understand goodness to be.
- B. As a solution to this challenge, Psalm 135:1-21 in its **historical context** stands as a rich encouragement for the godly to upright living amidst evil, discouraging times (as follows):

#### II. A Psalm To Encourage Upright Living Amidst Laboriously Evil Times, Psalm 135:1-21.

- A. Psalm 135 looked **backward** to *testify* how God had used His great sovereignty to bless the nation Israel:
  1. Verses 8 and 9 recall God's miraculous deeds that countered Egypt's control over His people.
  2. Verses 10 to 12 recall God's deliverance of Gentiles into Israel's hands so they could possess the land.
  3. As verses 1-3a call on God's people to praise God for being so good to Israel, verses 1-3a coupled this verses 8-9 and 10 to 12 show the psalmist's purpose in forming this psalm is to call on the people of God to praise God for using His sovereign power for Israel's welfare, Psalm 135:1-3a, 8-9, 10-12.
- B. However, to **appreciate** what this psalm teaches to *encourage* upright living amidst evil times, we need to recall where Israel **STARTED** just **BEFORE** these mighty acts of God came to pass (as follows):
  1. Just prior to Israel's exodus from Egypt, the people of God suffered **long, arduous injustices**:
    - a. Jacob's family had gone into Egypt to find protection under Joseph's reign, Gen. 45:17-18; 46:1-7.
    - b. However, after Joseph's death, a pharaoh arose over the land who did not know about Joseph, and he afflicted the quickly multiplying bands of Jacob's descendants, Ex. 1:8-11.
    - c. This continued until the people of God cried out unto the Lord for deliverance, Ex. 2:23.
    - d. We know from Genesis 15:16a that this suffering existed for **four arduous generations**!
  2. Additionally, God was waiting for the wickedness of the Amorites in the land of Canaan to become so evil that He would have to remove them from the land, Gen. 15:16b.
  3. Thus, The Egyptians, the kings Sihon of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan along with the Canaanites were becoming more and more wicked and oppressive before men all the while that Israel was suffering great unjust oppression under the Egyptians.
- C. Thus, God's **deliverance** for Israel seemed like a huge breath of fresh theological air to the downtrodden people of God, giving cause for great rejoicing. Hence the call to praise behind Psalm 135 as follows:
  1. Recalling their great deliverance from long, unjust oppression, the psalmist called on all the people of God in Israel to praise the Lord for proving to be a **good** God, Ps. 135:1-4.
  2. Since this deliverance proved God was greater than the false gods of these Gentile powers that God had overcome, the psalmist claimed that God was sovereign over all such false deities, Ps. 135:5.
  3. In fact, the psalmist concluded that God was totally sovereign, doing whatever He wanted to do with nature (Ps. 135:6-7) as well as with the evil people who had stood in the way of Israel's blessings, 8-11.
  4. God used His great sovereignty to give Israel the furnished, equipped land of Canaan, Ps. 135:12.
  5. Accordingly, the psalmist expressed to God directly His enduring fame, and compassion, Ps. 135:13-14.
  6. Then the psalmist contrasted the greatness of God with the futility of the Gentile false gods, 135:15-17, and noted that all who trusted in these false gods would one day be like them, 135:18.
  7. Finally, the psalmist called on all of God's people to praise the Lord for His infinite sovereignty and use of it to bless His long-beleaguered people, Ps. 135:19-21.

***Lesson:*** *Though Israel suffered great oppression for four generations of time, God wonderfully delivered the nation from oppression, giving them the bounty of Canaan. That caused Israel to testify that God is totally sovereign and infinitely GOOD in using His sovereignty finally to bless His own.*

***Application:*** *If we WONDER if God is sovereign or good because we are under LONG, ARDUOUS UNJUST oppressions, RECALL the TESTIMONY of Psalm 135! It may take four generations, but in the end, the GODLY get on top! That is enough to KEEP us trusting that God is sovereign and good!*