

No author is identified for this psalm of praise. The Jewish Study Bible offers this insight: "This is the first of two acrostic psalms introduced by "Hallelujah," comprised of short lines that often quote traditional expressions (see some examples below), and containing wisdom ideas. They are somewhat disjointed, and look like very successful answers to the following (possibly student) exercise: Compose a logical, complete acrostic of short lines using traditional statements. Perhaps the simple style suggests that these were didactic poems for children."

Guzik: "Many commentators note the connection between Psalms 111 and 112. James Montgomery Boice observed, 'the two psalms are an obviously matched pair. The first is an acrostic poem about God; the second is an acrostic poem about the godly man.'"

Psalms 111:1 ¶ Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.

The composer calls for all people to praise the LORD, to celebrate who He is and all He does. When we sing or shout "Hallelujah!" we are saying "praise the LORD." The psalmist declares his intent to boldly and publicly praise the LORD with all his heart, with complete sincerity.

Spurgeon: "...the true heart should sing hallelujah in any and every place. Why should we fear the presence of men? The best of men will join us in our song, and if the common sort, will not do so, our example will be a needed rebuke to them."

Psalms 111:2 The works of the LORD *are* great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

Psalms 111:3 His work *is* honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

The psalmist describes the works of the LORD as great, honorable (beautiful, majestic) and glorious (magnificent and beautiful). The Hebrew for "sought out" makes reference to pursuit with intent to worship. All who take pleasure in the works of the LORD should respond with that desire to show their gratitude in the form of worship. His righteousness (moral virtue) is described as enduring forever.

Psalms 111:4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion.

Psalms 111:5 He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

“Wonderful works” includes a reference to miracles, and the miracles of the LORD are not easily forgotten. In fact, we are still talking about His miracles of old today. I am sure the psalmist had in mind the many miracles the LORD had done on behalf of the people of Israel to bring them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

The psalmist also notes that the LORD is kind, merciful (from Hebrew for “gracious”) and full of compassion (mercy, pity). Those traits are what prompt Him to provide for those that revere Him and respond to Him accordingly. He is always mindful of promises. Implied—He will always be true to His word.

“He hath given meat...” - Again, I am sure the psalmist was probably thinking about how God fed the people of Israel as they journeyed in the wilderness. I don’t think it is wrong to make application to the way God provides both physical and spiritual food to provide for the growth and sustenance of those that fear Him.

Psalms 111:6 ¶ He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

The psalmist notes how the LORD has demonstrated His great power by giving them the lands formerly possessed by people who worshipped false gods. Again, I am sure he is probably referencing the miracles that delivered the people of Israel from Egypt, as well as His faithfulness in allowing them to conquer the people of Canaan.

Psalms 111:7 The works of his hands *are* verity and judgment; all his commandments *are* sure.

Psalms 111:8 They stand fast for ever and ever, *and are* done in truth and uprightness.

The psalmist knows that all that the LORD does is rooted in morality, faithfulness and in accordance with His law. His commandments are trustworthy and right at all times. God always acts and speaks in truth and justice, and that truth will never change.

Psalms 111:9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend *is* his name.

The LORD redeemed or delivered His people Israel from their bondage in Egypt. The truth is that He has provided redemption for all people that turn to Him in faith and repentance through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus the Messiah; He has redeemed them from the curse of sin. His covenant, any promise that He makes will stand forever.

Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”

The psalmist also realizes that the name of God is holy and reverend because it is interconnected with the character of a holy and reverend God, a God deserving of our “profound respect and esteem mingled with fear” (Webster). We should never use God’s name without giving it due respect. It should not be used as a curse word or a common exclamation of surprise. It really grieves me to hear God’s name used in vain by anyone but especially when I hear it from the mouths of those that claim to be Christian, e.g., “Oh my God.”

Psalms 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever.

The psalmist ends with an important truth—“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” As noted above, this fear is rooted in profound respect and esteem. Only when we truly esteem the source of all truth can we expect to gain wisdom to make the best use of our knowledge of that truth. Those who obey God’s commandments prove themselves to be wise.

The psalmist closes with the truth that God will be deserving of our praise forever; He never changes!

Spurgeon: “The praises of God will never cease, because his works will always excite adoration, and it will always be the wisdom of men to extol their glorious Lord.”