

**THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION**  
**Psalms: Living By Faith In God**  
**CXIII. Getting Raised Up From The Dust By God**  
**(Psalm 113:1-9)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Many people worldwide are experiencing what to them and many others is an unfair, unjust, difficult life:

(1) It occurs in the media: “An Emmy Award-winning CBS anchor claimed the Tiffany Network’s blind pursuit for diversity hires led to his being canned because he is an aging, white, heterosexual male, according to his blockbuster lawsuit.” (Alexandra Steigrad, “A punch in the Eye,” New York Post, July 4, 2024, p. 32)

(2) However, many people will never even get a chance to be a mainstream media anchor: Adam B. Coleman, a Black author of the book, “Black Victim to Black Victor” who has experienced poverty and homelessness, wrote that “in countless countries . . . where you’re born on the economic ladder is where you’ll die and upward mobility is stifled by corruption or governmental bureaucracy.” (Adam B. Coleman, “America still the beautiful,” Ibid., p. 8)

(3) It occurs to a lot of children and teens on social media platforms: “Kids who spend more time on social media . . . are more likely to experience depression and anxiety, according to multiple studies . . . Many are exposed to . . . pornography and violence. They also face bullying, sexual harassment and unwanted advances from their peers . . .” (“A realistic way to protect kids from social media,” Republican-American, July 7, 2024, p. 5B)

(4) As for bullying itself, “bullies hurled insults at a Waterbury Arts Magnet School student, forcing her to get off a school bus during a field trip in June 2017. The girl, Alison Ternig, had endured four years of bullying; finally, after the incident on the school bus, she committed suicide.” (“Standing up to bullies,” Ibid., June 26, 2024, p. 6A)

(5) Throughout my pastoral ministry, both women and men have reported of wrongs they have faced in life that still haunt them and make it difficult for them to get out of a debilitating emotional “rut” that harasses them!

(6) Americans face an uncertain, difficult future in view of uncertainties over the fall elections: (a) “(G)iven Mr. Biden’s . . . pattern of public confusion . . . (and) (w)ithout an elected Democrat who can serve as a clear successor to the president, and without a clear and present ability to draft a potentially viable candidate in Michelle Obama, who has the name recognition to win in November” for Democrats? (“Can Mr. Biden be replaced?” (Ibid., July 12, 2024, p. 6A) Besides, the millions of dollars in campaign contributions that have already been raised for the Biden-Harris ticket can allegedly be legally used only for them, complicating matters for Democrats! Then, with a perceived feeble president at the top of the ticket, Democrats running for lower offices stand to be hurt in the elections, a great concern for them! (b) However, Megan McArdle’s piece, “How the media sleepwalked into Biden’s debate disaster” (Ibid.) notes that in her view, Republicans have a challenge, too, for “over the years,” she reports, “I’ve heard a lot of people talking about Trump’s senior moments without ever putting those thoughts on the page.”

Need: *So, we ask, “What hope and encouragement is there for people who face an unfair, unjust, difficult life?”*

- I. As in the case of many people in this lost world who face unfair, unjust, difficult lives, pagan man in the Ancient Near East faced slavery to despotic, unreliable forces of nature and brutal, fickle, pagan gods:**
- A. “According to the pagan notions of cosmology the gods and the cosmos originated from the same primordial realm and were animated by a common source.” (Bruce K. Waltke, Creation and Chaos, 1974, p. 57)
  - B. Also, “(t)he position and function of” pagan “man in the scheme of creation paralleled precisely the status of the slaves of Mesopotamia” (Ibid., p. 65, citing Naburn M. Sarna, Understanding Genesis, 1972, p. 7).
  - C. Pagan man thus viewed himself as “involved in the battle of overcoming the hostile forces of nature, the gods of inertia,” that were perceived to be fickle, despotic and as unpredictable as nature itself! (Ibid., p. 58)
  - D. Thus, insecurity, fear, and oppression plagued pagan man, causing great pain to those facing unfair, unjust, difficult lives at the hands not only of an unpredictable universe and despotic gods, but also of human bullies.
- II. However, in contrast to pagan man’s experience, Psalm 113:1-9 shows God is to be highly praised for condescending to lift vulnerable, needy people from low estates in life to great honor and fulfillment:**
- A. The psalmist called for God’s servants greatly to praise the Lord, Psalm 113:1-4:
    - 1. God’s servants were to praise the Lord from this time forth and forevermore, Psalm 113:1-2.
    - 2. They were to praise the Lord worldwide, from the rising of the sun to its setting, Psalm 113:3.
    - 3. God was to be praised because He is sovereign over the nations and over the heavens, Psalm 113:4.
  - B. The reason for this call to praise was God’s marvelous, gracious condescension to lift vulnerable and needy people from low estates and positions of intense need to great honor and fulfillment, Psalm 113:5-9:

1. The psalmist rhetorically asked who was like the Lord God Who dwelt on high, Psalm 113:5.
2. To explain, the psalmist described how Israel's gracious God in vast contrast to pagan gods and pagan theology in spite of His infinite sovereignty over the entire universe condescended to lift up vulnerable and needy people among mankind to exalt, honor and richly bless them, Psalm 113:6-8:
  - a. Israel's Lord God looks far down below Himself to the heavens and the earth beneath Him, Psalm 113:6.
  - b. When He beholds mankind on the earth, God stoops even lower to raise up those who lack *dal*, station in life (Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*, p. 1076; H. A. W., *Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T.*, 1980, vol. I, p. 190) up from the figurative dust of the lowest class and to raise up those who lack the resources they once had in their lot in life ('*ebyon*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., H. A. W., p. 4) from the ash heap where they grieve, Psalm 113:7.
  - c. God causes these whom He has lifted up from the lowest class and those whose needs He has filled to sit with the princes of His people in high station and material bounty in that station in life, Psalm 113:8.
3. The psalmist then illustrated this gracious ministry of God in a particular case in Psalm 113:9 (as follows):
  - a. Barrenness for a woman in the Ancient Near East left her facing reproach and humiliation (*Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib.*, v. One, p. 479). It could motivate a husband to take a second wife in order to have children, so bigamy in that case was an emotionally crushing experience for a barren woman, cf. 1 Samuel 1:1-8.
  - b. However, God causes a barren woman to "settle down" (*moshby*, Hiphil [causative] ptc. from *yashab*, "dwell," B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 442-443) in a "house" (*bayit*, Ibid., Kittel) as a fulfilled married woman who also becomes the joyful mother of "sons, children" (*banim*, the plural form of *ben*, "son," Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 119-122), Psalm 113:9.

***Lesson:*** *In contrast to the Gentiles' false, despotic, fickle, struggling pagan gods who were part of the universe, Israel's God Who was sovereign over and separate from the universe that He had made graciously condescends so far as to elevate and fulfill the most vulnerable, lowly of people to positions of joyful, fulfilling honor.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) If we are hampered by a difficult past or a humiliating, debilitating lot in life, may we like barren Hannah of 1 Samuel 1:1-2:21 rely on God for His help and deliverance.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

Scripture provides God's direction and balm for the issues of concern in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) As for the alleged unjust firing of a CBS news anchor, Alexandra Steigrad (Ibid.) reports that the anchor, Jeff Vaughn, a man, was fired by CBS News CEO Wendy McMahon, a woman. A Christian man in that situation can be grateful that he no longer must submit to a woman in violation of 1 Timothy 2:12-15 and look for God's new job!

(2) As for those who are locked into economic immobility by corruption and government bureaucracy, a believer should focus on God's will for his life and God will meet his needs so that he can fulfill God's agenda for him. Paul as a prisoner in Rome testified to this in his own experience in Philippians 4:10-13 with 1:12-14.

(3) As for children and teens who suffer from exposure to social media, sticking with Bible reading and study where one is edified by God is far better than exposing one's mind to the unedifying views of fallen humanity on social media. Psalm 1:1-6 sharply contrasts the lot of one who heeds the ungodly versus one who dwells on Scripture.

(4) As for the bullying at a Waterbury school that led to a teen's suicide, we need to stick with what God says we are in Christ, noting the lofty position we have in Christ versus what bullies say about us (cf. Ephesians 1:1-23)!

(5) As for debilitating wrongs of our past, Galatians 5:16 promises that if we rely on the Holy Spirit, we will not fulfill the lusts of the sin nature. The Holy Spirit is greater than our past, so we can trust Him to handle our past!

(6) As for the uncertain, difficult future for Americans regarding the fall elections, (a) Romans 13:1 NIV asserts that "there is no authority except that which God has established." We may have no idea right now what awaits us in November, but God has the future all planned, so we can restfully trust in Him about it (Philippians 4:6-9). (b) We have often noted that Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 predicted we would face an era of oppressive leaders who were full of intrigue, and even George Will's recent piece, "Biden might exit, but rising distrust of institutions seems here to stay" (Ibid., *Republican-American*, July 10, 2024, p. 6A) supports this prediction. He stated, "Now the world's oldest (Democratic) political party and its media accomplices have effected a gigantic subtraction from trust: Leaders of the former lied about President Biden's condition until, on June 27, continuing to do so became untenable." God's Word predicted such intrigue and its effects, so we should live for Christ like Scripture directs!

**May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. If troubled by a bad lot in life, may we pray for God's deliverance and obey His Biblical guidance.**