

## Reflecting God's nobility and humility

Today's passage is found in Psalm 113.

The psalmist writes:

Praise the Lord!

Praise, O servants of the Lord,  
praise the name of the Lord!

<sup>2</sup>Blessed be the name of the Lord  
from this time forth and forevermore!

<sup>3</sup>From the rising of the sun to its setting,  
the name of the Lord is to be praised!

<sup>4</sup>The Lord is high above all nations,  
and his glory above the heavens!

<sup>5</sup>Who is like the Lord our God,  
who is seated on high,

<sup>6</sup>who looks far down  
on the heavens and the earth?

<sup>7</sup>He raises the poor from the dust  
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,

<sup>8</sup>to make them sit with princes,  
with the princes of his people.

<sup>9</sup>He gives the barren woman a home,  
making her the joyous mother of  
children.

Praise the Lord!

As we walk through this psalm, our pilgrimage will reveal three things: that God is the highest ruler, and that He willingly humbles Himself for us, and ... if you'll allow me, I'm going to do something unusual here. I'm not going to reveal the third point, at least not until later. I am doing that because it is something similar to what the psalmist does here. I'll explain as we draw further in. For now, we'll see that God is the highest ruler and that He willingly humbles Himself for us.

I chose the word pilgrimage because this psalm is positioned amongst several psalms that echo back to Israel's pilgrimage out of Egypt, specifically, 113 – 118. These psalms are known as the Egyptian "Hallel" psalms... that word may sound peculiar yet somehow familiar. We translate it as "praise" and when joined with the name of the Lord, we have the more familiar, "Hallelujah" meaning "praise the Lord" – which is exactly how the psalmist both opens and closes this psalm, creating what is known as an inclusio – that is a sort of intentional literary set of brackets that serves to show that everything within those brackets point us to what is contained between those brackets. We'll unpack this as we press further in.

First, however, we would do well to get a lay of the land. It is not uncommon to have a tour guide when one goes on a journey, and we are not without a tour guide here. The psalmist is our tour guide.

Often, a psalm contains some information about the author in the title before the first verse as in Psalm 3,

“A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son”.

However, we do not have that with Psalm 113, and as such, it is classified as an orphan psalm. That is fitting -- his nation would have been familiar with the themes of orphans

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King David had written in an earlier psalm that God is “a father to the fatherless” (68.5). We have a more concrete example in Esther. Even the city of Jerusalem is figuratively spoken of as an orphan.

From reading this psalm, we observe that our tour guide is passionate about life’s struggles. We discover his theology is not restricted to academic books, but rather he presses into the life’s harsh realities. He would have carried common burdens. We find we can identify with our tour guide.

It would make sense that we can identify with the psalmist... the psalms are prayers written in poetic form. And poetry can draw us in through common experiences.

But a good tour guide doesn’t focus on himself but draws attention to the [main attraction](#). So, to what does our tour guide point us?

Three times in the opening verse the psalmist calls us to:

- Praise the Lord
- Praise, O servants of the Lord
- Praise the name of the Lord

He tells us who to praise; who it is that is to present the praise; and then he clarifies who it is we are to praise.

That is not to say that we cannot praise others. Proverbs speaks of a husband praising his wife (31.28); we’re told to “let another praise you, and not your own mouths” (27.2). But such praise is not to rise above our praise for God, and that we are not to be silent in our praise for God.

People praise that which they love. The psalmist is calling us to place our highest praise to the Lord. He opens with, “Praise the Lord!” It is a very pointed invitation. It can be rendered, “Praise you the Lord.” It carries the impression of celebration with radiance.

He continues, "Praise, O servants of the Lord." This exhortation is presented to the entire congregation. One commentator views the passage as antiphonal – where the song is sung alternatively by two groups... building the sense to respond to the exhortation to praise.

Another commentator, questioning whether the Israelites would have been inclined to praise, states:

"... One might say that by nature the Jews were... more apt to brood upon life's enigmas than to fill the earth with stimulating music. How then account for the prevalence of praise... ?" (Interpreters Bible, p. 600).

If we're not careful, our experiences can dampen our desire to render praise. Life's challenges can distract us if not discourage us from giving praise the priority and the place it warrants. Even more seriously, as Matthew Henry puts it, we're likely to find ourselves kin to being "backwards" to praise.

But keep in mind that this is a Hallel psalm. This is the first of six psalms that reminded the Israelites of their passage out of Egypt. Psalm 113 would have been sung before the Passover meal every year... in every household, by all of God's people. Jesus would have sung the Hallel psalms around the Passover meal before heading to the Mount of Olives.

The Hallel psalms were a vibrant part of not only the Israelite tradition, but their identity. They would remind them of their former bondage as slaves in Israel and their deliverance by God's powerful acts.

Spurgeon puts it this way,

"While they were slaves of Pharaoh, the Israelites uttered groans ... but now ... they were to express themselves in songs of joy."

We may not have experienced having been a literal slave, but we've all experienced deliverance at some level. We know what it is to experience being free from something that at least constrained us if not having held us captive – and we recall the exuberance experienced at the moment of freedom. At such times, one cannot remain silent. So, the psalmist charges us: "Praise, O servants of the Lord."

As we move toward the passages between the brackets, we discover that

### **God is the highest ruler.**

Verse two opens with, "Blessed be the name of the Lord". Our tour guide does something intriguing here. If we are too casual or too rushed, we'll miss what he is pointing out.

It is one of the first hints pointing to God as Sovereign.

This word, “Blessed” in Hebrew means to bend the knee as in kneeling down. Ancient cultures viewed bending the knee as an expression extended to acknowledging another as a superior.

We do not practice it so much today, but we are not unfamiliar with it. We’ve all seen – at least in film – someone being knighted by a king. The knight acknowledges the king’s supremacy with an act of kneeling.

A good tour guide draws our attention to these subtle details with illustrative language.

The psalmist continues by charging us to recognize God’s supremacy “from this time forth and forever” – that is that His sovereignty is without limits in time... it is endless. It is not just for the now. It is not limited to when circumstances are favorable. It extends through all that we may face. Recall Job, in the midst of his extreme adversity, says, “Shall we actually accept good from God but not accept adversity?”

The praise is not only endless in time, for the psalmist shows that it is to be “from the rising of the sun to its setting” referring to all lands – therefore, there is no limit to His rule throughout all time and over all lands.

He further amplifies his point by expressing, “The Lord is high above all nations”.

Think about the imagery this would have evoked in the minds of the Israelites of his day. They repeatedly were surrounded by nations that threatened to invade and have dominion over them. The book of Judges alone covers a multitude: The Bible gives great details about the scope of the threat that Israel persistently faced – Sisera of the Canaanite army had 900 iron chariots; Nahash the Ammonite threatened to gouge out the right eye of every Israelite as part of a treaty; later, Sennacherib of Assyria amassed an army of 185,000 against Jerusalem (2 Kings 18, 19)– not around the nation of Israel, but the city of Jerusalem which is contained within an area of about 2 ½ miles.

When the psalmist says that the Lord is high above all nations – this would have resonated with the Israelites. They were being called to recognize that God has authority over every oppressive regime, over every threat that marshals its forces, regardless of how impending the threat. God reigns supreme over all nations.

Isaiah the prophet puts it:

Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,  
And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; (40.15a)

What are the threatening “nations” that presently surround you? We may not be threatened by a nation as Israel faced, but we have forces that press in against us, whether it is fear or anxiety or some uncertainty. For some, it may be a threat to financial security, for others it may self-defeating or even self-destructive thoughts. Whatever you’re confronted with that presses against God’s purposes in your life is

where you need to see that God is greater. Israel overcame opposing nations when they put their faith in God. If we are to overcome the threats that stand against us, we must turn to God for provision and protection. He is the highest ruler.

The psalmist continues: “His glory is above the heavens.”

A God of the universe deserves universal praise.

Even if we could exhaust all thoughts on the point that God is the highest ruler, all considerations would lead to the same question the psalmist raises:

“Who is like the Lord our God?”

He then again references God’s supremacy by showing that God is “seated on high” referencing his throne. But as quickly as our tour guide has us reach to the heights, he begins a downward thrust.

*Building off that question the psalmist begins to fill in this sort of “literary relief” with nuanced details.*

These details reveal that

**God willingly humbles Himself for us.** Where do we see this? Verse six reads, Who is like the Lord our God, who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth?

If we are “backward” to praise, we are equally if not more so to the idea that one who is so great would choose to humble himself. It is like when Jesus stooped to wash Peter’s feet, Peter replies,

“You shall never wash my feet.” Such humility doesn’t fit within our constructs. So, when the psalmist exalts God above all nations and expresses He is enthroned above heaven, it is striking that God would choose to humble Himself - - to abase Himself.

We’re given two examples. The first is that God raises the poor from the dust. This refers to those who are not only financially destitute but are powerless to change their circumstances. It is used to describe those who are considered helpless, insignificant, and not only downcast but cast out. One author describes their state as eking “out their existence by sifting through the rubbish outside the city walls.” (Lawson, p. 206). These are people for whom it seems that everything goes against them... and it is those that our God chooses to raise from the dust.

The psalmist echoes the thought by expressing that God “lifts the needy from the ash heap.”

We likely hold a different image of what constitutes needy in our culture compared to that of the psalmist's. There would have been fewer "needy" on the ash heaps than the broader expression of "the poor". The prophet Amos speaks of the needy being sold for a pair of sandals. We might liken that to being sold for a pair of flip-flops.

If that isn't enough, our tour guide uses a term that would have been very familiar to his people: an ash heap.

This wouldn't have been the simple remains of burnt ashes from a barbeque pit or campfire. No, the imagery would have evoked a much more repulsive response.

An ash heap is elsewhere translated as dung. It is refuse, waste. In those contexts, it points to the section outside the city walls beyond the Dung gate, which served as the path to dispatch the city's waste. As a result, the needy would have been shut out from society.

Few have experienced the literal expressions painted for us by the psalmist here. But the dust and ash heap points to that which is outside the city. The city is pictured as the center of life. This is speaking into our priorities and values. A friend of mine from years ago would often refer to new purchases as a "future landfill device." He recognized the initial benefit that various resources would provide, but ultimately, they would be a "future landfill device" and as such, it gave him a greater perspective as to where to place his priorities.

Ask yourself, "What do you value as the source of life? Is it some future landfill device? What do you find that you are most loyal to? What are you unwilling to negotiate away? If your response to any of those is anything or anyone other than God, then the psalmist is showing us that such misplaced priorities are outside the center of life: God. We all have things that we place false hope in. It may be a status symbol or a job with great pay or a hobby that demands more of you at the expense of those who are closest to you and who will be with you long after the job has gone to the wayside, or the hobby has faded ... these things become our ash heaps. They may be good things, but we elevate them to ultimate things. That place is reserved for the One who is worthy of all praise. God calls us to turn to Him rather than lesser things which have the illusion of vitality and fail to deliver what they promise.

In a few short verses our tour guide has had us explore God's transcendence – that is that He is exalted above all creation, and we've seen His immanence – that is, His nearness. He is highly exalted and He willingly humbles Himself. As God says in Isaiah,

... "I dwell in the high and holy place,  
and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit,  
to revive the spirit of the lowly,  
and to revive the heart of the contrite. (57.15)

God is the highest ruler and He willingly humbles Himself for us.

We now come to our third point: I was silent earlier on it. That's because the author does something similar in this passage. He raises the question: Who is like the Lord our God? And the psalmist is silent on that. Or so it would seem. He doesn't answer it directly, but he does have us reflect on it with all that surrounds that question. He demonstrates that there is no one equal by piecing elements together that reflect God's supremacy in nobility and humility. In like fashion, our third point is not expressed outrightly, but when we piece together the elements that the psalmist presents, we see that that

**our lives are to reflect both His nobility and His humility.**

See in verse eight that God makes those who were formerly poor and needy "to sit with princes, With the princes of His people."

God doesn't just pick up the poor and needy, dust them off and put them on a shelf as some sort of static display. There is action for them to take. They are to be productive. They are to be proactive, not idle. They are to engage.

The biblical picture of a prince is not some watered-down version from an animated movie. A prince would be one who conducts himself in an admirable manner in all circumstances. He would be regarded as being of noble character and noble thought and have the resources to distribute according to his generous will. A prince's business transactions would be above reproach and he would treat others with deep respect, having the authority to be firm but never overbearing or threatening to his subjects. He would have a disposition of willingness to move toward that which is needed to be done.

David, in the penitent psalm, cries out:

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit. (51.12)

That "willing spirit" is the same word used as "prince" in Psalm 113.

In the book of Genesis, Joseph serves as an example of a prince. Joseph delivered his family from famine and is in the position to provide not just daily provisions, but a land for them to raise their flocks. That is an important detail that parallels Psalm 113. Joseph didn't rest on his laurels. He was proactive with his position. He contributed to the betterment of the kingdom he served by seeking to better his people. Joseph didn't just give his people a handout. Joseph made a way for them to contribute.

The idea that God raises people to positions of responsibility is in view again in the closing verse:

He gives the barren woman a home,

Making her the joyous mother of children.

Our initial impression of this passage can stir up some resistance. Isn't a barren woman antithetical to becoming a mother? It would be easy to look at the challenges of a barren woman becoming the mother of children and be puzzled by the physical impossibility of that scenario and stall there.

But that would be short sighted. We would do well to pause, reflect on the grace of God that He faithfully extends to His people and recall how His great wisdom is not bound by our limitations.

How does a woman who is barren become the mother of children? How does God do the impossible?

This is why it is vital to take in all of the Bible. When we lift our eyes from being obsessed with our problems and set them on the full counsel of God we are reminded of times when God intervenes in the lives of His people.

Reaching back to Genesis 11, when introduced to Sarai, whose name would become Sarah, we're told she "was barren. She had no child." Yet God intervened. He looked down upon Abram, her husband, and her and gave them the promise that they would have a child.

We could recall Rebekah, or Rachel, or Samson's mother – each described as barren. Hannah is introduced to us as having "had not children". Yet in these circumstances, God acted. Their story opens with hardship but concludes with triumph.

A critical mind may raise the question, "So why then must any woman have to face this challenge?" It would be good to discern the motive of the question first. Not all who raise such a question have the same motive. An individual who is outright opposed to the idea that God even exists will not have the same motive as a woman who has for years yearned to have a child to call her own. One raises the question from bias, the other from struggle. One is closed to any reasonable response and the other is searching for a response.

There are reasonable responses to the question as to whether God exists. Previous messages speak into that and if you are open to discussing such questions, we're open to dialogue. In that God addresses this psalm to the one who is struggling, we'll keep our focus there as well.

How do you respond to a woman who wants to bear a child and cannot? Let's be honest here. First, it is a legitimate question. But each woman's struggle is unique. No two situations are identical. To adequately address each one, one would need to listen to the details of each story. So, I'm not going to set myself up for failure and present a one size fits all approach here. We've had that line pitched with clothing and although it



may fit all, it doesn't exactly fit all the same. I maintain that there is no "one size fits all" response to this question.

However, that is not to say that there is no response. So, let's delve into this.

There are layers here. First, we've seen examples in Sarai, Rebekah, Rachel, Samson's mother and Hannah.

These examples show us God has the ability to act outside of the constraints of creation. This does not mean that this is how God acts in all situations. That is an important distinction to make.

Further, to expect God to act in the same way in all situations would be to constrain God – to limit Him. So that would be an error. And how our hearts respond to that reveals more about our hearts than it does about God.

So, where do we find an answer to this. We go to the same source we should always go to when we have a question about God – the Scriptures. This is the instrument that He has given to us that speaks of who He is and what He is doing.

So, let's look at this more closely.

One of the layers in the psalm rests with the expression "barren woman". Notice, every reference to people –

- Servants
- Nations
- The poor
- The needy
- Princes
- Children

... every reference is plural – with the exception of the Lord and the "barren woman". The God who is high above the heavens, who is enthroned on high who is to be praised in all lands at all times – looks upon the plight of this singular woman. He is not unaware of, nor disinterested in her sorrow. He knows how difficult it is simply to form the words to express her distress.

Let's pause here for a moment. In our culture, a woman can desire to have a child while facing the reality of not being able to give birth and her struggle can fairly easily go unnoticed. This passage speaks into that – but it goes much deeper. This passage was written in the midst of the Hebrew culture. It cannot be understated the expectation that was pervasive in the Hebrew culture for women to bear children. Becoming a mother in ancient Israel was viewed as a "crowning achievement" for every woman.

Recall the first blessing in Genesis pointed toward being fruitful and multiplying.

Recall Boaz, seeking to take Ruth's hand in marriage, receives a blessing,  
"... May the Lord make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel  
and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel.

Motherhood was recognized as a blessing. You do not have to go back in history to study Hebrew or any other culture to recognize that motherhood is a blessing. The richness that a mother can attest to from hearing the first cry from their child cannot be replaced with any amount of silver. There is a special bonding between a mother and her child unlike any other. Mothers give of themselves, tirelessly, sacrificially, and endlessly. They pour their hearts into the lives of their children. As such, they are worthy of recognition and honor. If you are a mother, Happy Mother's Day.

If you are here and you are unable to have a child. What would God say to you?

We see in this psalm that He looks far down – He is looking at all the heavens and earth.

He begins to narrow His focus - He raises up the poor –.

He narrows His focus even more: He lifts the needy.

He settles His focus on one lone individual. The barren woman. He sees her struggle.

The Hebrews would have been very familiar with this for the theme was repeated throughout the Scriptures.

The Hebrew language may be challenging in some ways, but there is a brilliant depth to it as well. There is an artistry that is revealing. Point in case is a particular literary device that is often employed in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is known as a chiasmic structure. A chiasmic structure, or chiasm, is a way for the author to highlight the main point of his story without taking too much time in the middle of the telling of the story to say, "This is the main point of the story".

We have an example in the story of Noah's ark. Most, if not all are familiar with this story. If you were to ask most people, "What is the main point of the story of Noah's ark?", you would probably get varying responses.

But let's look at a chiasmic structure in Genesis 6 – 8. The way a chiasm works is that you have an opening statement that is reflected or echoed in the closing statement. Each succeeding statement will have a statement reflected in receding order, all leading up to one point that is not repeated or echoed. This is the author's way of showing, this is the main point. Everything I've been building up to serves to highlight this very point.

As we see in the account of Noah's ark:

The first statement shows that God resolves to destroy the corrupt race, which is reflected in the final statement where God resolves not to destroy humankind.

You'll see I've color coordinated the corresponding statements to make it easier to identify visually.

As we continue with the account, we see that secondly, Noah builds an ark which is echoed in Noah building an altar. Next, the Lord commands the remnant to enter the ark, echoed with the command to leave the ark. This chiasm continues with the beginning of the flood echoed by the earth drying. The final echoed statement shows the flood prevailing for 150 days and then receding equivalently. Then we're met with the one point that is not repeated or echoed. This is the author's way of saying, get ready – everything I've been leading up to and everything that will unfold in reverse order brings us to this key point of the story.

So, what do we see from the story of Noah's ark?

### **God remembers Noah.**

God is a personal God who takes interest in His people.

Let's take a quick look at one more chiasm. I've not color coordinated this one since you are now experts in being able to identify a chiastic structure.

Looking just a few chapters past Noah's ark, we come to the account of the tower of Babel. We first observe that "all the earth had one language" is echoed with all the languages being confused throughout the whole earth. The author continues to construct the chiasm with the use of geographic designations of "there" echoed with "from there" and then with relational expressions of "one to another" echoed with "everyone the language of his neighbor". The chiasm continues with, "Come, let us make bricks" mirrored with "Come, let us confuse" and moving to "Let's make for ourselves" repeated in "that the humans built" ... and we observe the a few others echoed expressions until we come to the last repeated item being, "a city and a tower" echoed with "the city and the tower". All this leads to one key point that is not echoed. What is the author stressing in this account?

"Then the Lord came down to see".

With Noah's ark, God remembered Noah. At the tower, God came down to see the affairs of men. We're not highlighting a chiasm in Psalm 113, but we are highlighting a point that would have been familiar to the original audience: God, who sits enthroned in heaven, humbles Himself to come and see the affairs of those He loves. Psalm 113 reveals that even though God is enthroned in heaven, He comes down to see this solitary barren woman.

We see, as one author puts it, that God "is equally at home 'above the heavens' (4) and at the side of one forlorn person." (p. 402).

Forlorn – that speaks to the barren woman. It speaks to those who have lost children. It speaks to those whose children have distanced themselves. God puts His eye upon such.

But he not only sees her struggle – He meets her in it.

Look again at the passage... it reads,  
He gives the barren woman a home,  
making her the joyous mother of children.

Did you catch that? What does it say God first gives her before a child? A home. Is that what she needed? A home? “Hi God, I so desperately want a child.” God responds: “Here is a home.” What’s going on here?

God is setting the stage. Not only is He going to meet her heart’s desire – and this is important – it may not always be in the manner in which you may expect – remember, we cannot limit God to answering our prayers strictly according to our inclinations – so again, not only is He going to meet her heart’s desire – it may be through birth, it may through adoption, it may be moving her to pour out her life into the lives of others so that she becomes a spiritual mother to many, much like the expressions we see elsewhere in Scripture where, for example, Paul refers to others in familial language:

- He refers to select women and men as his sisters and his brothers.
- Paul refers to the mother of Rufus as his own mother; (Romans 16.13)

In her book *Spiritual Mothering* Susan Hunt observes that the name of God and Scriptures,

“... surely give value to mothering, but they also imply a capacity for mothering that has been given to women. Biological birthing is not the activator of this capacity; women who have never given physical birth still have this mothering capacity and can exhibit mothering characteristics.”

Her book develops the theme and approach to spiritually pouring one’s life into others so that they discover and deepen their understanding of the grace of God toward them and the life to which He calls us in Christ Jesus.

So again, not only is God going to meet her heart’s desire, but more. He gives her purpose... that purpose is clothed in a promise: He gives her a home.

The imagery of a woman receiving a home would have conveyed a responsibility that accompanied the home, which would have implied a purpose for her life.

Remember in Proverbs 31(v. 27), the “excellent” woman is one who  
“...looks well to the ways of her household...”

There is a connection with having a home and pouring yourself into the household.

We see it in a related passage. Isaiah writes:

Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;  
break forth into singing and cry aloud,  
you who have not been in labor!  
For the children of the desolate one will be more  
than the children of her who is married,” says the Lord.  
<sup>2</sup>“Enlarge the place of your tent,  
and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out;  
do not hold back; lengthen your cords  
and strengthen your stakes. – Isaiah 54.1 - 2

God is taking her struggle and turning them into something that reflects His nobility and furthers His kingdom.

Recall God gave Joseph not only deliverance, but responsibility when He positioned Him as a prince. We have a similar expression with the poor and the needy in Psalm 113 – God makes them sit with princes, with the princes of His people.

God brings deliverance and then positions His people to be proactive, not idle. He gives them a home and expects them to look well to their household.

Are you looking well to your household? When the Scriptures speak of one’s household, it most commonly has God’s family in mind and considers areas that need addressing such as maintenance and repairs to your home, but it goes beyond that. We’re more than physical beings, so when the Scriptures call us to look well to your household it conveys the idea of spiritually pouring into your family, whether that is your immediate family or if you do not have children, then know that you are not without a family in that, if you have come to faith in Christ, then you are part of the family of God. Pour into the life of your family that God has given you.

We pour into our families by speaking of the adventures of Jesus, when we lead our families in prayer and when we gently remind each other of the supremacy of Christ. When we act nobly as princes would conduct themselves, we’re reflecting the nobility of Christ.

The important thing to remember is that you are to reflect BOTH – not just the nobility to the exclusion of humility. That would be to confuse pride with nobility. Isn’t that the error that Satan made – saying,

‘I will ascend to heaven; ...  
I will set my throne on high;...  
<sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
I will make myself like the Most High.’  
Isaiah 14.13 – 14

Satan doesn't ask the question, "Who is like the Lord our God?"; he makes the audacious claim that he will make himself like the Most High. That's pride. Pride is not noble.

On the other end, we're not to display only humility – God doesn't call us to be doormats. Your life is to reflect both the nobility and humility of Christ. Live a life of holiness and humility.

Nobility without humility is pride. Humility without dignity omits the nobility to which God calls us. To neglect either distorts His purposes. Embrace both the nobility and the humility of a life that finds its source in the One who demonstrates the ultimate nobility and humility: Jesus Christ.

Acts of nobility are princely acts – princes are proactive and engage. They identify needs and move toward resolving them. Acts of humility do not have us surrender our dignity, but rather have us see the dignity in others.

What that looks like for one family will differ from another – but they all have the same goal – reflecting His nobility and His humility. For one family, it is mapping out a plan to engage your family on spiritual matters. For some, the first step may be putting a Bible on the dinner table and beginning family discussions centered on who God is and what He does. Don't let any sense of unfamiliarity deter you from looking well to your household. Open the Bible, ask, "What do you see? What does it say? What meaning does it reveal? What is it leading me to embrace or to act upon?" Act princely, move toward meeting that need.

That is majestic. On the humility side, some may recognize they have treated others in ways that fail to dignify them... whether that is their tone of voice or through disapproving looks. Humble yourself, recognize the dignity that God inherently gives each person in that He has made them in His image.

Whatever it is that God is laying on your heart – choose to reflect His nobility and His humility in your life.

We cannot do this on in our own strength. Remember, it is the Lord who lifts the poor and needy.

If we are honest, we see that our sins have us outside the city walls. We are the poor and needy. Our lives are barren apart from God. We need God to lift us out of our broken condition. If He is willing to lift us from our ash heaps, only then can we expect to experience the nobility for which we were created and humbly walk in it.

And we see that is exactly what God has done through His Son Jesus. Jesus shared the glory He had with the Father before the world was created – that reflects His nobility -- and came down to not only look upon our sad and desperate condition - that

demonstrates His humility -- but to take it upon Himself - - that demonstrates His nobility and His humility. The Scriptures reveal that God,

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5.21

Jesus willingly took upon Himself our sins – that is a princely act. He lifts us out of the dust – and out of the dung hill of our sinful condition – that is an act of humility -- and positions us to participate in the furtherance of His Kingdom by reflecting the very nobility and humility we see in Him and that has transformed our lives. Who is like the Lord our God? No wonder the psalmist concludes: Praise the Lord!

#### NOTES:

The chiastic structures referenced can be found under the Exposition section of Genesis 6.9 – 8.22 & 11.1 – 9 from Dr. Constable's notes at:

<https://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/html/ot/genesis/genesis.htm>