

Psalm 105-106 – Chapter Study

Psalm 105

Like several of the psalms, this one has no inscription so we don't know who wrote it or what prompted it. What we do know is vs. 1-15 are found in 1 Chr. 16 where David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem & installed it in the new tabernacle he built for it.

Most likely Chronicles merely records *part* of the song David sang that day.

Psalm 105 is the *whole thing*.

¹ Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples!

The call to *give thanks to the Lord* is repeated *12 times* in Psalms.

The psalmist knew the importance of reminding people that God is the *source* of blessing.

Thanksgiving is the follow up & seal of faith.

Asking God for blessing is the front side of faith; it's anticipation of God's goodness.

Giving thanks is the back-side of faith; it's appreciation of God's goodness.

Thanksgiving is crucial because it *propels* us into larger faith.

Which is why the psalmist next says, "Call upon His name."

When I was growing up, most parents understood the importance of teaching their children to be thankful & to express it.

As with so much of parenting today, thankfulness is something that has been neglected.

Christian parents need to be diligent to train their children to be thankful and to express it.

For what they learn in reference to man they will transfer to God.

² Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works!

There are many forms of praise. Singing is one of them.

But notice who the singing is TO GOD.

Praise is not for our entertainment; it's for the glory & delight of God.

Another form of praise is to talk with others about what God has done.

³ Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!

We see this reference to the NAME of God often in Scripture.

It means much more than the label we call Him by.

God's name is more than an ID tag.

In the ancient world the name represents the person's character, not only WHO they are, but WHAT they are.

While some people '*glory*' in things like money, power & fame, believers can glory in all *God* is.

God told the prophet Jeremiah, (9:23-24)

'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,

Let not the mighty man glory in his might,

Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;

But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me,

That I am the Lord, exercising loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these I delight,' says the Lord.

⁴ Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore!

This word 'seek' means *intense concentration*.

It's no half-hearted, lukewarm nonchalance about God.

It's Priority One; it's the One Thing that defines a person's life.

What do you want written on your headstone?

If your life could be boiled down to one thing, what would it be?

What do others see in you that captures your essence?

If they had to summarize your life in a brief sentence, what would they say?

The Psalmist says here that a worthy epithet is "He/She sought God."

My aspiration, my life-theme & motto is found in 1 Tim. 1:12 where Paul says, "I know whom I have believed."

5 Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, & the judgments of His mouth, Marvelous works are things that cause us to *marvel*, to wonder, to stand in awe.

It seems odd the psalmist would call us to *remember* them. How can you forget a marvel?

The sad thing is, we *do forget*.

They don't actually leave our memory; it's just that their power to stir faith diminishes.

Think of Israel on the way to Canaan.

After the marvels they'd witnessed in the Exodus, when faced with the need for water, they began to whine & complain that God wanted to kill them with thirst.

If they had been rehearsing, remembering, the miracles they'd already witnessed, certainly when the need for water arose they would not have complained.

Christian, when facing a need, infuse your request to God with a faith bolstered by the remembrance of what He's already done.

Remember the cross – the greatest marvel of all.

6 O seed [descendants] of Abraham His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! [Israel]

7 He *is* the Lord our God; His judgments *are* in all the earth.

He is the sovereign, mighty, and majestic God who governs the whole world in wisdom & power.

In vs. 8-45, we take a tour of God's mighty & merciful acts on behalf of His people.

8 He remembers His covenant forever, The word *which* He commanded, for a thousand generations,

9 *The covenant* which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac,

10 And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel *as* an everlasting covenant,

11 Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance,"

12 When they were few in number, Indeed very few, and strangers in it.

When Jacob's family went to Egypt they were only 70 in number.

13 When they went from one nation to another, From *one* kingdom to another people,

This looks to the earliest years of Israel's history under the patriarch Abraham, Isaac & Jacob.

We read in Genesis how the rulers of Egypt & Canaan were baffled by the divine protection Abraham & his family enjoyed.

14 He permitted no one to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes,

15 *Saying*, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm."

If you remember Abraham's story, God protected him even when he was being a bit of a lying weasel. Another marvelous evidence of God's grace.

16 Moreover He called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread.

17 He sent a man before them— Joseph—*who* was sold as a slave.

Now we get a quick recounting of Joseph's life; revealing the amazing *providence* of God.

18 They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons.

19 Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the Lord tested him.

20 The king [Egyptian Pharaoh] sent and released him, The ruler of the people let him go free.

21 He made him lord of his house, And ruler of all his possessions,

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure, And teach his elders wisdom.

As great & wise as Egypt was, Joseph brought them the revelation of the true God.

If only they had heeded what he taught, things would not have turned out for them the way they did in the plagues.

Because the Egyptians *rejected* the knowledge Joseph brought & enslaved the Jews, they were laid low in judgment.

23 Israel also came into Egypt, And Jacob [his family] dwelt in the land of Ham.

24 He increased His people greatly, And made them stronger than their enemies.

25 He turned their heart [the Egyptians] to hate His people, To deal craftily with His servants.
Why would God turn the hearts of the Egyptians against His people? This sounds cruel.

It's the opposite – it's protection.

Because of the racism of the Egyptians toward the Hebrews, they were kept isolated as a people.

Without this racial hostility, Israel would have been assimilated into the Egyptian system & culture & would have been judged along with the rest of the Egyptians.

Sometimes God's mercy *seems* severe, harsh, hard.

But it's a mercy which knows the future & only, always applies what's needed to bring ultimate blessing.

26 He sent Moses His servant, *And* Aaron whom He had chosen.

27 They performed His signs among them, *And* wonders in the land of Ham [Egypt].

28 He sent darkness, and made *it* dark; *And* they did not rebel against His word.

29 He turned their waters into blood, *And* killed their fish.

30 Their land abounded with frogs, *Even* in the chambers of their kings.

31 He spoke, and there came swarms of flies, *And* lice in all their territory.

32 He gave them hail for rain, *And* flaming fire in their land.

33 He struck their vines also, and their fig trees, *And* splintered the trees of their territory.

34 He spoke, and locusts came, Young locusts without number,

35 *And* ate up all the vegetation in their land, *And* devoured the fruit of their ground.

36 He also destroyed all the firstborn in their land, The first of all their strength.

37 He also brought them out with silver and gold, *And there was* none feeble among His tribes.

38 Egypt was glad when they departed, For the fear of them had fallen upon them.

39 He spread a cloud for a covering, *And* fire to give light in the night.

40 *The people* asked, and He brought quail, *And* satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

41 He opened the rock, and water gushed out; It ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For He remembered His holy promise, *And* Abraham His servant.

43 He brought out His people with joy, His chosen ones with gladness.

44 He gave them the lands of the Gentiles, *And* they inherited the labor of the nations,

45 That they might observe His statutes *And* keep His laws. Praise the Lord!

There's a point in this tour of history.

The same God who fulfilled His promise to Israel can be counted on to fulfill the promises He's made to his people today.

Psalm 106

This psalm is a companion to the previous.

While Psalm 105 celebrates God's faithfulness, ***this one chronicles Israel's failure.***

It closes out the 4th scroll of the Psalms.

1 Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever.

2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can declare all His praise?

There's no end of telling the good God has done & continues to do.

3 Blessed *are* those who keep justice, *And* he who does righteousness at all times!

4 Remember me, O Lord, with the favor *You have toward* Your people. Oh, visit me with Your salvation,

5 That I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones, That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, That I may glory with Your inheritance.

Israel's sin cannot outlast God's loving-kindness.

The psalmist wants to share in the renewal of God's favor, so he moves to confession

6 We have sinned with our fathers, We have committed iniquity, We have done wickedly.

7 Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders; They did not remember the multitude of Your mercies, But rebelled by the sea—the Red Sea.

8 Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake, That He might make His mighty power known.

9 He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it dried up; So He led them through the depths, As through the wilderness.

10 He saved them from the hand of him who hated *them*, And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

11 The waters covered their enemies; There was not one of them left.

12 Then they believed His words; They sang His praise.

13 They soon forgot His works; They did not wait for His counsel,

14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, And tested God in the desert.

15 And He gave them their request, But sent leanness into their soul.

This refers to how they cried out for meat & God sent an abundance of quail which they feasted on.

But even though their **bellies** were full, they were still **unsatisfied**.

Of course they were!

They'd been steadily confronted by the power & presence of God over several weeks.

They'd come to the realization that life is about much more than food & drink.

There's more to living than satisfying the desire of the body.

The important things of life are more about the soul & spirit than the flesh.

It was their encounters with the supernatural that revealed that.

But they were trying to find satisfaction in the purely physical and it wasn't working anymore.

This happens to people today.

They live most of their lives by the desires of the flesh.

Then something happens where they come face to face with the reality of spirit & it shakes them up.

The needs of the soul for love & purpose begin to stir.

But because they've spent their whole life focused on the flesh, they try to quench the soul's thirst in food, drink, entertainment. It doesn't work.

Jesus is the only One who can satisfy the hungry, thirsty soul.

16 When they envied Moses in the camp, *And* Aaron the saint of the Lord,

17 The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan, And covered the faction of Abiram.

Rebels in the camp of Israel were envious of Moses' & Aaron's calling & tried to foment a rebellion.

The leaders were these 2 guys Dathan & Abiram.

God indicated who He wanted to lead His people by causing a sinkhole to form under the feet of these guys & their supporters.

18 A fire was kindled in their company; The flame burned up the wicked.

When the priests Nadab & Abihu tried to grab some of God's glory at the dedication of the tabernacle – a fire came out of the altar & fried them.

19 They made a calf in Horeb, And worshiped the molded image.

We all know that story.

To give us an idea of just how wayward the people of Israel were – they made this idol even though the visible manifestation of the presence of God was swirling over their heads.

20 Thus they changed their glory Into the image of an ox that eats grass.

21 They forgot God their Savior, Who had done great things in Egypt,

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, Awesome things by the Red Sea.

Understand, they didn't forget God because a great amount of time had passed without Him showing up.

They **turned their backs** on Him.

All of this points up the fact that belief in God is not a matter of proof, of evidence.

There's plenty of evidence for the existence of God.

Unbelief is not an issue of one's intellect; it's a matter of the will.

People forget God because they don't; want to answer to Him.

They love their sin more than He. They want it more than God.

And God in His infinite love, honors the choice we make because that's what love requires.

23 Therefore He said that He would destroy them, Had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, To turn away His wrath, lest He destroy *them*.

Because God is a just judge, the wages of sin are death.

Sin is a crime that must be punished.

Though God warned them of the consequences of sin and they saw those consequences exacted time & again, still they chose rebellion.

So God told Moses that He was going to exact justice.

But Moses interceded and asked for God to wait & in an amazing display of mercy, God said, "Okay."

Why? Did God change His mind?

No – not at all. There's a great lesson in all this for us.

God knew Moses would intercede & ask Him to delay judgment.

God wanted to answer His request for mercy so that you & I would be instructed about the power of prayer.

We can take the place Moses did.

There is a holy God, and there are sinners who need to be saved but aren't interested.

Judgment is coming. But we can pray that God would show mercy by delaying judgment, and during the delay, His grace would woo & win wayward hearts to repent of sin.

The fact is, that's how & why we're here today – because someone prayed for us.

We can now do that for others.

Up through v. 23, the psalm chronicles the rebellion of Israel during the Exodus.

Now it turns to their failure in entering the promised land & their years of wandering in the wilderness.

24 Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe His word,

25 But complained in their tents, *And* did not heed the voice of the Lord.

26 Therefore He raised His hand *in an oath* against them, To overthrow them in the wilderness,

27 To overthrow their descendants among the nations, And to scatter them in the lands.

28 They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor, And ate sacrifices made to the dead.

29 Thus they provoked *Him* to anger with their deeds, And the plague broke out among them.

30 Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, And the plague was stopped.

31 And that was accounted to him for righteousness To all generations forevermore.

The king of Moab used the women of Moab as a stumbling block to Israel.

They dressed up in seductive clothing & seduced the men of Israel.

The women promised the Jewish men if they sacrificed to their idols they could have sex with them.

Many of the Jewish men went along with it and God sent a plague that began to ravage the camp of Israel.

Phinehas was outraged at the selfish carelessness of the men of Israel who would so imperil the lives of others.

He grabbed a spear & went after one of the offenders.

His zeal for the Lord brought an immediate stay to the plague.

32 They angered *Him* also at the waters of strife, So that it went ill with Moses on account of them;

33 Because they rebelled against His Spirit, So that he spoke rashly with his lips.

Even though God had proven Himself so faithful to take care of the needs of the people, when they arrived at a new campsite and immediately started accusing God of trying to kill them with thirst, Moses got real upset & misrepresented God by yelling at the people and banging on the rock to bring forth water.

This though God had clearly told him only to speak to the rock and it would flow.

For this breach, and seemingly small offense, Moses was barred from entering the Promised Land.

Because you see - it wasn't a small offense. Moses' actions messed up a major lesson God wanted to impart about the Messiah.

In the NT we learn that the rock God provided water from was a picture of Jesus.

He is the fountain of living water who brings salvation to the world.

Moses was only to strike the rock *one time* – symbolic of the cross where Jesus died once for the sins of the world.

Then, after that, Moses was simply to speak to the already-smitten rock & it would flow – just as once we come to faith in Christ, forgiveness & cleansing come by confession.

But you know, even Moses' *failure* was taken up and turned to good.

Being barred from leading Israel into the Promised Land, Moses, through whom the Law came, becomes a picture of how the Law cannot bring us in to the fullness of God's promises in the Spirit-filled life.

Who took over from Moses & brought Israel into the Promise – Joshua = Yeshua = Jesus.

All the law can do is show us that we are sinners in need of a savior.

As Paul tells the Galatians, the law is a tutor that brings us to Christ.

Only Jesus can bring us into the promise & blessing of God – not the law, never the law.

Now the story turns to Israel's failure in Canaan.

- 34 They did not destroy the peoples, Concerning whom the Lord had commanded them,
35 But they mingled with the Gentiles And learned their works;
36 They served their idols, Which became a snare to them.
37 They even sacrificed their sons And their daughters to demons,
38 And shed innocent blood, The blood of their sons and daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood.
39 Thus they were defiled by their own works, And played the harlot by their own deeds.
40 Therefore the wrath of the Lord was kindled against His people, So that He abhorred His own inheritance.
41 And He gave them into the hand of the Gentiles, And those who hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies also oppressed them, And they were brought into subjection under their hand.
43 Many times He delivered them; But they rebelled in their counsel, And were brought low for their iniquity.

You remember the cycles of oppression & deliverance during the time of the Judges.

- 44 Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, When He heard their cry;
45 And for their sake He remembered His covenant, And relented according to the multitude of His mercies.
46 He also made them to be pitied By all those who carried them away captive.
47 Save us, O Lord our God, And gather us from among the Gentiles, To give thanks to Your holy name, To triumph in Your praise.
48 Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the Lord!