

## Psalm 107-110 • Chapter Study

### Psalm 107

This begins the 5<sup>th</sup> & final scroll of Psalms.

While a few of these psalms are longer, most of them are short.

Many of them were popular songs sung by the pilgrims as they made their way toward Jerusalem for the feasts.

Psalm 107 was written *after* Israel's Return from Exile in Babylon.

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

2 Let the redeemed of the Lord say *so*,

Let those God has saved give testimony to what He has done!

Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy,

3 And gathered out of the lands, From the east and from the west, From the north and from the south.

To redeem means to buy back.

The idea here is that because their ancestors sold themselves to worship idols, God allowed them to experience the full consequence of their rebellion.

They were defeated by the Assyrians & Babylonians who carried them away into captivity, scattering them far & wide to foreign lands.

But there in their lands of exile, now sick of their idolatry, they repented & asked God to forgive them.

He heard their cry & graciously answered by gathering them out of all the places they had been scattered & brought them back to their land.

4 They wandered in the wilderness in a desolate way; They found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, Their soul fainted in them.

This is an apt description of those who returned.

Israel had been laid waste & all they found were ruins.

6 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, *And* He delivered them out of their distresses.

7 *And* He led them forth by the right way, That they might go to a city for a dwelling place.

The first round of returnees rebuilt a portion of Jerusalem.

As other groups arrived they moved on to some of the other ruined villages & towns to restore them.

8 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the Lord *for* His goodness, *And for* His wonderful works to the children of men!

This verse is repeated as a stanza break 3 more times.

After each break are verses which pretty much follow a pattern -

**First**, they celebrate God's faithfulness,

**Second**, they describe man's foolishness, &

**Third**, call people to look to the Lord.

9 For He satisfies the longing soul, *And* fills the hungry soul with goodness.

That is exactly what God does. In fact, **only He can** because we were created **for** Him.

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger & thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Everyone's soul longs for God.

The problem is, sin has bent us & distorted our desires so that we lose sight of the rightful object of our longing.

People try to satisfy their hunger & thirst by the things of this world.

And while they may be new & exciting for a time, they eventually lose their appeal because they haven't really brought that satisfaction our soul longs for.

God is the object of our desire. Only He can satisfy.

10 Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, Bound in affliction and irons—

11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, *And* despised the counsel of the Most High,

12 Therefore He brought down their heart with labor; They fell down, and *there was* none to help.

13 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, *And* He saved them out of their distresses.  
14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, *And* broke their chains in pieces.  
15 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the Lord *for* His goodness, *And for* His wonderful works to the children of men!  
16 For He has broken the gates of bronze, *And* cut the bars of iron in two.  
17 Fools, because of their transgression, *And* because of their iniquities, were afflicted.  
18 Their soul abhorred all manner of food, *And* they drew near to the gates of death.  
19 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, *And* He saved them out of their distresses.  
20 He sent His word and healed them, *And* delivered *them* from their destructions.

So we see the pattern 3 times – 1) God is good, 2) Foolish Man rebels 3) They repent & God restores.  
Now the psalmist turns to a meditation on how clueless regarding God humanity is.

21 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the Lord *for* His goodness, *And for* His wonderful works to the children of men!  
22 Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, *And* declare His works with rejoicing.  
Instead of rebellion against God, people ought to be celebrating His goodness!  
23 Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters,  
24 They see the works of the Lord, *And* His wonders in the deep.  
25 For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea.  
26 They mount up to the heavens, They go down again to the depths; Their soul melts because of trouble.  
27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, *And* are at their wits' end.  
28 Then they cry out to the Lord in their trouble, *And* He brings them out of their distresses.  
29 He calms the storm, So that its waves are still.  
30 Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven.

The Psalmist uses the experience of storm-tossed sailors as an example of all human behavior.

Sailors board their ship to embark on a voyage.

They launch out to sea & leave the safety of the harbor for the open water.

When the water is calm and the waves smooth, sailors can be pretty tough guys.

But then a storm comes and they go up & down in massive waves.

Though they are seasoned seamen, they tumble across the deck & cling to the rigging in abject terror – crying out to God for help.

Help comes and the storm abates.

And what do the sailors do? They mutter a quick thanks toward the skies, but go right back to their wicked ways.

That scenario takes place on land too.

For people who've never been on a ship have their storms to.

Life is smooth, calm, then a storm of trial comes and they go up & down on the winds of fortune & emotion.

Their self-sufficiency is shown to be useless and so they cry out to God for help.

Help comes, and they mutter a generic thank you to whoever is up there.

But then, far more often than not, they go right back to their old ways and forget all about the God who just helped them.

31 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the Lord *for* His goodness, *And for* His wonderful works to the children of men!

32 Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, & praise Him in the company of the elders.

Remember how this Psalm began – V. 2

Let the redeemed of the Lord say *so*,

So here the Psalmist calls people to not do like tough, self-sufficient sailors who mutters a thanks heavenward under their breath.

Be a real man and boldly announce your thanks to God publicly! Take a stand.

33 He turns rivers into a wilderness, And the watersprings into dry ground;

34 A fruitful land into barrenness, For the wickedness of those who dwell in it.

While God is patient & longsuffering with the wicked, giving them rain & sun in their season so their crops will grow –

When they remain indifferent to Him despite His many overtures, then God will let them have the consequence of their desire to ignore & reject Him.

If they don't want him involved in their lives, then He will withdraw, including the multitude of His blessings they've enjoyed.

Their the rains will stop & the rivers will dry up and turn lush fields to desert.

Imagine parents, a mother & father who've raised a daughter well.

They've been great parents, loved her, provided for her all her life.

When she turns 18 she got a job but uses her paycheck to buy clothes, shoes, & for her own entertainment.

Her parents pay all her bills; tuition, gas for her car, groceries, insurance, all the basics.

When she turns 20, she moves out of the house. Her parents pay her rent, buy groceries, continue to take care of the car insurance.

They just ask her to come home for a visit every week.

She does, for the first year.

But when she turns 21, she stops coming over as often.

A couple years later, she doesn't visit at all and when they call her she doesn't answer the phone.

Mom & Dad have a talk & decide it's time to stop paying their daughter's bills.

Would we fault them?

Most of us would expect them to have stopped long before.

This is the situation with God.

He shows great grace, paying our bills, pouring out massive blessing on us.

And most people go about their lives oblivious to it.

God sends His Spirit to woo them, but they ignore His gently overtures.

So God turns off the blessing – really, in answer to their request that He leave them alone.

His desire is that they would wake up to the reality of His goodness once they see a halt in its supply and turn back to Him. So

35 He turns a wilderness into pools of water, And dry land into watersprings.

36 There He makes the hungry dwell, That they may establish a city for a dwelling place,

37 And sow fields and plant vineyards, That they may yield a fruitful harvest.

38 He also blesses them, and they multiply greatly; And He does not let their cattle decrease.

Just as God will halt blessing to awaken people to their need of Him, He restores blessing to those who look to Him.

39 When they are diminished and brought low Through oppression, affliction and sorrow,

40 He pours contempt on princes, And causes them to wander in the wilderness *where there is no way*;

41 Yet He sets the poor on high, far from affliction, And makes *their* families like a flock.

When God is using adversity to awaken people to their need of Him, social status will not help.

Generally, the rich & powerful are able to weather trouble better than the poor because their station provides a refuge.

But when God is at work – such man-made distinctions matter not at all.

He brings princes low & exalts the poor.

42 The righteous see *it* and rejoice, And all iniquity stops its mouth.

43 Whoever *is* wise will observe these *things*, And they will understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.

The Psalmist is saying that the course of wisdom is to look for how God is at work and to give thanks to Him for His amazing goodness.

Psalm 108

A Song. A Psalm of David.

**This Psalm combines 2 passages from Psalms 57 & 60.**

**The 1<sup>st</sup> half praises God for help given & the 2<sup>nd</sup> half is a prayer for present help.**

**I won't make much comment since we've already covered these verse when we did Psalms 57 & 60.**

1 O God, my heart is steadfast [steady on You]; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

2 Awake, lute and harp! I will awaken the dawn.

Praise & worship of God is how he begins his day.

3 I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples, And I will sing praises to You among the nations.

4 For Your mercy *is* great above the heavens, And Your truth *reaches* to the clouds.

5 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, And Your glory above all the earth;

Now David turns to prayer.

6 That Your beloved may be delivered, Save *with* Your right hand, and hear me.

David understands that effective prayer is based on God's promises, so he says,

7 God has spoken in His holiness: "I will rejoice; I will divide Shechem And measure out the Valley of Succoth.

8 Gilead *is* Mine; Manasseh *is* Mine; Ephraim also *is* the helmet for My head; Judah *is* My lawgiver.

9 Moab *is* My washpot; Over Edom I will cast My shoe; Over Philistia I will triumph."

10 Who will bring me *into* the strong city? Who will lead me to Edom?

11 *Is it not You, O God, who* cast us off? And *You, O God, who* did not go out with our armies?

12 Give us help from trouble, For the help of man is useless.

13 Through God we will do valiantly, For *it is* He *who* shall tread down our enemies.

While David composed this during his reign as king, asking God to give the armies of Israel victory over their enemies, a later Psalmist took portions of 2 of David's psalms that were applicable after the return from Babylon and merged them into a new Psalm for the people to worship with.

The same neighbors who'd troubled Israel in David's day were once again harassing the returned exiles.

David's prayer was as potent & pertinent for them as it had been for him.

Psalm 109

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

Both Psalms 69 & 109 are clearly prophetic of Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

In Acts 1:16, Peter referred to this Psalm.

Psalm 109 was written by David during his son Absalom's rebellion.

Though the psalm is aimed at one person, David drew from his experience of betrayal on several occasions.

**Saul** had pursued him.

**Ahithophel** conspired against him.

**Shemei** cursed him.

1 Do not keep silent, O God of my praise!

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful Have opened against me; They have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

3 They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, And fought against me without a cause.

4 In return for my love they are my accusers, But I *give myself to* prayer.

Instead of defending himself and getting all up in their grill for the horrible things they were doing & saying, he went to prayer and just talked to God about it.

This is so hard. Hard but right!

When people are saying untrue things about you, when they are accusing you of things you didn't do, or saying you didn't do things you did, everything inside wants to set the record straight.

But all too often, all you do in defending yourself is stir the pot & give the enemy more ammo to fire back.

Jesus was utterly innocent of any of the lies told about Him.

He was perfect in all He both did & said.

But that did not stop His opponents from saying terrible things about Him and moving to have Him killed. His response was to leave His reputation to God.

<sup>5</sup> Thus they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love.  
Now the psalm turns to deal specifically with Judas.

<sup>6</sup> Set a wicked man [or – ‘a wicked one’] over him, & let an accuser stand at his right hand.  
“**The accuser**” is one of the names of the devil.

This is prophetic of when Satan entered Judas at the last supper and he went out to meet up with the priests to betray Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> When he is judged, let him be found guilty,  
Judas was found guilty.  
And let his prayer become sin.  
His prayer wasn’t heard because his repentance wasn’t sincere.

<sup>8</sup> Let his days be few,  
Judas died a young man.  
*And* let another take his office.

In Acts 1, the Apostles used this passage as the basis for replacing Judas with Matthias.

<sup>9</sup> Let his children be fatherless, And his wife a widow.

<sup>10</sup> Let his children continually be vagabonds, and beg; Let them seek *their bread* also from their desolate places.

There’s no record of Judas being married or having children.

Remember that David wrote this a thousand years before Christ.

It’s **primary** application was to someone who’d betrayed him.

David isn’t being merely vindictive here. This isn’t spite because this guy has harmed him.

This betrayer is an evil person who’s attacked God’s choice of king for His people.

His wickedness has been passed on to his sons who will continue his legacy of evil.

So David asks God to end their line.

<sup>11</sup> Let the creditor seize all that he has, And let strangers plunder his labor.

<sup>12</sup> Let there be none to extend mercy to him, Nor let there be any to favor his fatherless children.

<sup>13</sup> Let his posterity be cut off, *And* in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

<sup>14</sup> Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord, And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

<sup>15</sup> Let them be continually before the Lord, That He may cut off the memory of them from the earth;

<sup>16</sup> Because he did not remember to show mercy, But persecuted the poor and needy man, That he might even slay the broken in heart.

This is one, nasty fellow in whom there is not a shred of hope of repentance.

He is wholly given over to evil.

<sup>17</sup> As he loved cursing, so let it come to him; As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him.

<sup>18</sup> As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, So let it enter his body like water, And like oil into his bones.

<sup>19</sup> Let it be to him like the garment which covers him, And for a belt with which he girds himself continually.

This guy was a false friend, a worker of evil.

Everything he did was malevolent & aimed at causing harm to others.

So David asks that it all come back to him & wrap him like a tight blanket.

<sup>20</sup> *Let this be* the Lord’s reward to my accusers, And to those who speak evil against my person.

<sup>21</sup> But You, O God the Lord, Deal with me for Your name’s sake; Because Your mercy *is* good, deliver me.

This can seem like a bit of a double-standard at first.

David prays for the ruin of his enemies while God blesses him.

But David isn't just being petty & selfish here.

He bases his request on what he knows of God's will.

God wants to bless ALL people, and will, if & when they repent.

But those who refuse to repent, will know God's wrath & judgment.

Since God had made it so manifestly clear that David was his choice to rule Israel, those who opposed David were really in open warfare with God.

They were a dangerous threat to the safety & security of Israel, the very people God appointed David to serve & protect!

When God **blessed** David, it meant blessing for the people because that's where David's heart was – to advance & enhance their lives.

But it's been a long battle with his enemies and He's tired. He says . . .

22 For I *am* poor and needy, And my heart is wounded within me.

23 I am gone like a shadow when it lengthens; I am shaken off like a locust.

24 My knees are weak through fasting, And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness.

25 I also have become a reproach to them; *When* they look at me, they shake their heads.

26 Help me, O Lord my God! Oh, save me according to Your mercy,

27 That they may know that this *is* Your hand—*That* You, Lord, have done it!

This is why both David & Jesus took their distress to God instead of fighting back & defending themselves.

SO that when their vindication came, God would get the glory for it!

28 Let them curse [me], but You bless; When they arise, let them be ashamed, But let Your servant rejoice.

29 Let my accusers be clothed with shame, And let them cover themselves with their own disgrace as with a mantle.

In other words, let all the shame they wanted to dump on me be poured onto them.

30 I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; Yes, I will praise Him among the multitude.

31 For He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, To save *him* from those who condemn him.

Psalm 110

A Psalm of David.

This psalm is purely prophetic of the glorious Messiah when He comes to assume David's throne.

1 The Lord [Yahweh] said to my Lord [Adonai = Master], "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

The right hand is the position of favor & power.

God the Father Says to God the Son that He will be completely victorious over all evil.

Though the Messiah would suffer the humiliation of the incarnation, He would ascend to glory & reign over all.

We read in Matt. 22 [vs. 41–46] that one day in Jerusalem Jesus posed the Pharisees a question.

They'd been grilling Him for a while, so He decided to pose them a tough theological question.

It was aimed at challenging their refusal to acknowledge Him as God.

His question came from this verse.

He asked them what they believed concerning the identity of the Messiah.

From whom would the Promised One descend?

They answered correctly that He would be the Son of David.

Jesus showed them that according to this, which they knew was a prophetic, the Messiah would also be David's Lord.

How could He be David's Son & David's Lord at the same time?

You see, in the Jewish mind, descendants are always lesser than their ancestors.

So the Messiah, as David's **descendant** would be **lower** than David.

How could David refer to him then as his Master?

The only way is if the Messiah was more than mere man. He was both God & man.

**As God**, He would be **David's Lord**. **As Man**, He would be **David's Son**.

Jesus was both.

The Pharisees were stumped, not because they couldn't see the answer but because they DID see the answer but refused to admit it.

So the Gospels tell us from that time on, no one bothered Jesus with any more questions. [Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44]

<sup>2</sup> The Lord shall send the rod [scepter] of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! No earthly power will be able to resist the rule of Messiah when He comes in glory to establish the Kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> Your people *shall be* volunteers In the day of Your power;  
God's people are a willing army who serve Him gladly.

They aren't mercenaries nor paid troops.

They enjoy His blessing but they do not serve FOR that blessing.

They serve for the love of the King.

In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.  
These are just awesome & eloquence words describing Jesus' glory when he comes again.

Beauties of holiness.

Womb of the morning.

Dew of youth.

<sup>4</sup> The Lord has sworn and will not relent [back down], "You *are* a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

The greatness of this promise doesn't carry to us today because the priesthood isn't as potent a fixture was it was to the people of the ancient world.

Some Roman Catholics may get a glimmer of what's going on because traditional Catholicism centered their liturgy on the priest.

Protestants have done away with the priesthood in favor of what the NT teaches about the priesthood of all believers.

Unfortunately, we've largely neglected the concept of priesthood altogether.

In order to understand v. 4 we need to realize how important the priest was in the ancient world.

Priests were the way people made contact with God, and how God made contact with them.

The priest was the bridge-builder between heaven & earth.

He was the one the secret knowledge was committed to about how to approach God.

If he was gone or busy, then people had no chance of gaining the divine ear.

Also, priests received their office from other priests.

Their ability to perform their office was bestowed on them by other priests.

Because of this, there were different ranks or levels of priests.

Each with differing ability to make contact with God and secure His favor.

David says that the Messiah is an eternal, undying priest whose office is at the absolute zenith of priestly authority.

With this mention of **Melchizedek**, David reaches all the way back to Genesis & the story of Abraham who gave a tithe to the priest of Jerusalem.

What was amazing about this story is that the Jews thought the priesthood of Aaron, Moses' brother, was the highest there was.

After all, they were the only ones allowed into the holy of holies to see the Shekinah glory of God above the ark of the covenant.

But David points to an even greater priesthood here as he reminds them of Melchizedek, the priest of Jerusalem.

Remember, that ancestors are **greater** than descendants in the Jewish mind.

Well, Aaron was the son of Amram, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, Abraham's son.

So Aaron is 6 generations down the line from Abraham.

Yet Abe **paid a tithe to** Melchizedek & was blessed **by** him.

The lesser is always blessed by the greater.

All of this points to the fact that Melchizedek's priesthood is on a level far surpassing that of Aaron.

The Messiah, as a descendant of David's was not from the priestly line of Israel, Aaron's line.

His priesthood is derived from a higher order – the order of Melchizedek.

The point for us is that our access to & contact with God is utterly secure because it comes through an eternal & perfect priesthood.

<sup>5</sup> The Lord *is* at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath.

<sup>6</sup> He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill *the places* with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.

<sup>7</sup> He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

The imagery here is of the Messiah as He goes forth to execute justice & judgment.

No one will be able to stand against Him.

And he will pursue the campaign to end all evil until it is utterly finished.