

PSALMS

Songs From The Heart

Psalm 103

OVERVIEW OF PSALMS

- The word Psalm is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *mizmor*. It signifies “music accompanied by stringed instruments.”
- The word *mizmor* is found 57 times in Psalms, so the translators used it to describe the whole book.
- Cymbals, timbrels, wind instruments, and stringed instruments are all named in the Psalms.
- There were Levites who were professional ministers and musicians for worship at the tabernacle and later the temple. There must have been large Jewish orchestras and large families of God-ordained musicians and singers constantly preparing, practicing, and then leading worshipers in the Psalms.

PARALLELISM IN HEBREW POETRY

- **SYNONYMOUS PARALLELISM** - a line of thought is immediately followed by another line of similar thought that expresses the same thought in a different way. A good example is Psalm 71:5-6.
- **ANTITHETICAL PARALLELISM** - a line of thought is immediately followed by another line of opposite thought or contrasting insight. A good example is Psalm 71:13-14.

THE SEVEN TYPES OF PSALMS

- The Psalms have seven types or categories. There is the **hymn**, the **lament**, the **thanksgiving psalm**, the **psalm of remembrance**, the **psalm of confidence**, the **wisdom psalm** and the **kingship psalm**.
- The hymn psalm takes us to the height of our experience in the Lord. The lament psalm takes us to the depth of our experience. These can be known as the mountain tops and the valleys of faith.
- The Psalms show us that we can control our emotions, and they help us process and focus them properly. We should never repress our emotions, but release them rightly to God and invite Him in.

- God will turn your doubts into trust, fears into faith, sorrow into joy, and hate into love if you let Him.
- The Psalms always lead from a negative to a positive. They always end in faith, hope, or praise.
- The lament psalms have a similar structure. Not all of these will be in every lament psalm.
 1. Invocation
 2. Cry for help
 3. Complaints
 4. Confession of sin or assertion of being innocent
 5. Curse of enemies
 6. Confidence of faith in God's response
 7. Hymn or blessing

PRAISE GOD FOR HIS GRACE & MERCY (103:1-5)

- Psalm 103 is attributed as being a Psalm of King David.
- God declares that David is a man after His own heart - one of the greatest declarations and compliments given in scripture. Most people seek God for His Hand or His Power or His Mind or His Wealth. David simply sought after who God was. David loved God for being who He is!
- King David of all people has taught us how we can go deeper in God through praise and worship. We can seek God and bless God with our praise!
- When God is the object, we bless Him with and by our praise!
- (vs1) The word "soul" represents the whole man or woman.
- (vs1-2) In verses 1 and 2, King David is calling himself to praise God with all that he is.
- The Hebrew word for "all" is *kalal*. It means "to complete" or "to make perfect."
- It means what it says. It means "totality, whole, entirety." It also represents the innermost being. We would say the heart. To the ancient Near Easterners, it was the area of the stomach and inner organs.
- (vs2) King David uses the name "Lord" 10 times when speaking to God or of God in this Psalm.
- Five of those times he uses the phrase "Praise the Lord" which is still used predominantly in Christianity around the world when desiring to express thanks for God's goodness.

- There is a call for reflection on the goodness of God and all the benefits and rewards from serving Him.
- He's calling all of his soul and heart, along with all of his mind, to focus praise on God.
- (vs3-5) David shifts from speaking to himself to speaking to "you" who are worshiping with this Psalm.
- He reminds you that the Lord is the one who can forgive all "your" sins and all "your" sicknesses.
- Sin is the inward sickness of the heart and spirit. Sin is the core issue of every single problem you face.
- Sin is the main barrier that keeps you from intimacy and relationship with God.
- Even though God is innocent, pure, and faultless, He took "your sins" upon Himself so that He could forgive and redeem you from hell and bless your life with everything He is and has.
- Although we are the ones who have broken our relationship with God, He alone is the only one who can and willingly does restore those relationships.
- He took out His wrath and justice on Jesus so He could dispense His *forgiveness* and *grace* on us.
- The Lord also desires to fix the inner and external problems in "your" life that are a result of the original sin of Adam and Eve and the curse on this world and mankind. He desires to and can heal us of our troubles, which refers to *any inward or outward affliction*. It doesn't mean just medical diseases.
- (vs4) King David is probably personally reflecting on the Lord's faithfulness in literally saving him time and again from death at the hands of his enemies. "The pit" is a synonym for *the grave*.
- David speaks of God's *love* and *compassion* throughout this Psalm, referencing them four times each.
- Not only are you a recipient of God's forgiveness, healing and deliverance; you are "crowned" with God's abundant *love* and *compassion*. Crowning speaks of "bestowing blessing" on you, where it naturally covers your entire life. God desires to bless you from the top of your head to your feet.
- The Hebrew gives a connotation that the crown is made up of, or *interwoven*, from God's abundant *love* and *compassion*, like intricate handiwork.
- Love is the overarching word to describe God's nature. But compassion speaks of His aligning His heart with your situation and His acting to rescue you from affliction.

- Simply put, God saves you from emptiness and death and gifts you a life full of His love.
- (vs5) When previously you were just wanting to survive, God wants you to thrive and be satisfied. That your physical and emotional strength will be like a young person who looks at the endless possibilities and has energy and excitement for living.
- God's Word tells you that when you put Him first in your life, He will give you the desires of your heart.
- An eagle's youth was renewed with an annual moulting of the old feathers, replaced with fresh new feathers ready to fly for the next season.

PRAISE GOD FOR HIS LOVE & COMPASSION (103:6-12)

- (vs6) King David's vision of God's goodness is being widened from himself and even you the worshiper. He sees the Lord's goodness and right dealings with everyone who is hurting and needy.
- He switches from speaking to himself and to you, and now he's speaking to Israel and the world.
- The phrase "for all the oppressed" carries a connotation in the Hebrew preposition that has to do with spatial relationships. It denotes motion and movement. God Himself actively moves towards those who are oppressed. The Lord personally involves Himself with those who are hurting.
- (vs7-9) God didn't stay at a distance from the suffering of Moses personally or Israel as a nation. He heard their cries and came to them. He revealed Himself to Moses through a burning bush. He spoke to Moses and even Israel of His compassion and care. He worked miracles to set them free.
- God was slow to anger by not holding Israel accountable for forgetting His promises and worshiping other gods. They had turned to idols, yet He reintroduced Himself and saved them from destruction.
- (vs10) Unlike the rest of the world that remembers our past mistakes and treats us accordingly, God who knows all things does not. Once we're forgiven, He treats us as if we are pure and innocent. How?
- (vs12) God removes our sins as far as the east is from the west. When He forgives us, He sends those wrongdoings far away from Himself. Despite being omniscient, He literally causes Himself to forget.
- When we remember our past that has already been forgiven, God doesn't know what we're talking about. It's as if those things that were before, never existed.

- (vs11) Why would God do this or treat us like this?! Because His love is so great for you and this world it can't be measured! "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love"
- The depths and heights of God's love are beyond our grasp or imagination. The value He has placed on us is beyond measure.
- You cannot contain or even understand the fullness of love God has for you. But you can experience it.

PRAISE OUR FATHER FOR HIS NEVERENDING LOVE (103:13-18)

- (vs13) King David is trying to help us to understand God's nature. Who is God? Why would He care and be so loving? The answer is simple and yet profound. The Lord is also our loving Heavenly Father.
- God revealing Himself as a Father is a way for us to understand how He interacts with us. An earthly father has a natural instinct to nurture and protect his children. God's like that, but incalculably more.
- (vs14) Our Heavenly Father knows each one of us and made us intricately who we are.
- (vs15) He who has no beginning and no end still knows the frailty of our lives and how short they are. God knows we are a mere breath away from eternity, and is in control of all our days.
- (vs16) God is aware of how much time you and I have left and has numbered our days. He won't waste any of them. Like Abraham and Sarah, it can feel like His promises are long in coming, but He purposes everything in a timely, ordained way. Your life has been planned and laid out long before you existed.
- (vs17) And yet, as frail as we are and easily forgotten by mankind, He knows us and has called us to be with Him "from everlasting to everlasting" in His love for eternity.
- The word for *love* here in Hebrew is *che sed*. It means "the steadfast love" of the Lord. It can also be translated "steadfast mercies or steadfast faithfulness."
- The Lord's goodness to you will not stop at the end of your life. The Lord's steadfast love will go beyond you and through you. He will be faithful to your children and grandchildren!
- (vs18) Who are those that these tremendous promises belong to? Those who love and keep their unbreakable promise with God and His commands.

PRAISE GOD IN HIS ETERNAL DWELLING (103:19-22)

- (vs19-22) King David now turns his attention away from himself, the worshiper, Israel, or the world.
- Now he is being elevated in His revelation of the Lord and imagines Him in His eternal glory and absolute power. God is beautiful. God is love. God is in absolute control over His dominion.
- (vs20) David calls on the angelic beings to “Praise the Lord!”
- (vs21) David calls on those who occupy heaven and the multiplied millions if not billions saved for eternity to “Praise the Lord!”
- God is often times referred to as the “Lord of Hosts” or the “God of Angel Armies.” This gives a sense of the absolute power and command that God has of those “who do His will.”
- Four verses in a row King David uses the word Lord now to refer to God. He is Master of the universe.
- His call to you and all creation 3 verses in a row is “Praise the Lord!”
- Your part is to offer yourself completely. “Praise the Lord, my soul!”
- King David said in Psalm 23, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not need anything.” He declared His desire for the dual nature’s of God guidance. “Your rod and staff, they comfort me.”
- The rod of God brings His loving discipline and the staff brings His loving guidance.
- God is both Lord and Father. You need to embrace both aspects of your relationship with Him. It is for your betterment and blessing. Choose to let all that you are to be under His loving leadership and care.

POWER VERSE: (103:1) “PRAISE THE LORD, MY SOUL; ALL MY INMOST BEING, PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME.”

Psalm 103

- ¹ Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
- ² Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—
- ³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,
- ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,
- ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- ⁶ The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.
- ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel:
- ⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.
- ⁹ He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;
- ¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;
- ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
- ¹³ As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;
- ¹⁴ for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.
- ¹⁵ The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field;
- ¹⁶ the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.
- ¹⁷ But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—
- ¹⁸ with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.
- ¹⁹ The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.
- ²⁰ Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.
- ²¹ Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.
- ²² Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the LORD, my soul.