

SBC – June 11, 2023
Psalm 107:1-43 (NKJV)
“A Messianic Storm Psalm”

We don't know for sure who wrote Psalm 107 but some believe that it was David. It was evidently written after the time of the Babylonian Exile.

Psalm 107 is an overview of Israel's history with a couple of major foreshadowing's of the Messiah. Psalm 107 It is a song about the proneness of human wandering and God's deliverance. Some have titled it, "God to the Rescue". It emphasizes God's "inexhaustible mercy" in restoring His people when they come to Him in repentance.

There are four different pictures that not only apply to Israel but have application generally regarding human fallenness and God's deliverance for those who call on Him. *"The four pictures show that everyone's story is different, and yet everyone's story is the same."* (David Guzik) How glorious it is that God is faithful to deliver those who call on Him.

Slide # 1

Outline for Psalm 107

Theme: The Faithful God of Deliverance

- A. Let the Redeemed Give Thanks – vv. 1-3
- B. Four Different Pictures of Deliverance:
 - 1) Those who Wandered in Barren Places -vv. 4-9
 - 2) Those who sat in Darkness – vv. 10-16
 - 3) Those who Suffered their own Folly – vv. 17-22
 - 4) Those who Experienced Sea Storms – vv. 23-32
- C. The Sovereign Lord of Reversals – vv. 33-42
- D. The Wise will Observe These Things – v. 43

Each of the four pictures follows the same basic sequence of 1) Man's Predicament; 2) Man's Petition; 3) God's deliverance, and 4) Thanksgiving to God.

- A. Let the Redeemed Give Thanks – vv. 1-3

Psalm 107 (NKJV)

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

Verse one sounds the theme for the entire Psalm. God is to be thanked for being a delivering God; specifically stated here in terms of Him being GOOD and for the fact that His MERCY endures forever.

God is ever “good”. He is wholesome and right. He is lovingly benevolent.

The word “mercy” is actually the rich Hebrew word “hesed”. It is a major word in this Psalm. It is often translated as “goodness” or “lovingkindness”. It is used 248 times in the OT (cf. Jer. 9:24; 32:18; Lam. 3:22; Dan. 9:4) and has been called an undefinable word. The KJV translators initially translated it 14 different ways eventually ending up for the most part with the compound word “loving –kindness”. It is often translated as “steadfast love”, “loyal love”, or “covenant love”.

Hesed is a combination of faithfulness and mercy. It denotes undeserved kindnesses. This is a word that seeks to express the multifaceted nature of God’s indescribable GRACE (cf. 2 Cor. 9:15, 1 Pet. 4:10). Hesed emphasizes God’s persistent, unconditional, love that never stops caring for His people. It underscores tenderness, compassion, kindness, and mercy, that just won’t quit. Above all it underscores God’s unfailing FAITHFULNESS!

It is an OT nuance of God’s grace! Hesed is the kind of love expressed in God’s COVENANT relationship with Israel (cf. Mal. 3:6). Hesed goes right along with God’s name YHWH as both stress His unchanging COVENANT FAITHFULNESS!

Truly God is to be thanked for the kind of God that He is. He is good. He is everlastingly faithful in showing mercy.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy,

The basic idea of redeemed is always DELIEVRED. It means to deliver by paying a price. God’s people are redeemed – they have been delivered by the LORD and they ought to say so. It is wrong to be silent about the LORD’s great deliverance. We ought to be thankful and we ought to testify of what God has done for us.

Redeemed from the hand of the enemy may well have God’s deliverance of His people Israel from the Babylonian Captivity, but has application to our deliverance from the bondage of sin and Satan.

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

This language would ultimately seem to look forward to Israel's ultimate deliverance when He will gather repentant Israel from the four corners of the earth and restore them back to the land of promise forever.

But the history Israel in many ways foreshadows this coming ultimate deliverance as illustrated in four pictures given in verses 4-32

B. Four Different Pictures of Deliverance:

1) Those who Wandered in Barren Places -vv. 4-9

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.

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.

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

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

This first picture seems to depict Israel's 40 years through their desolate wilderness experience on their way to the promised land. Along the way they experienced hunger and thirst. In their plight they cried out to God and He delivered them. He led them on their way towards their promised dwelling place in the holy land.

Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men because He satisfies the longing soul. He meets our needs. Satisfaction is found ultimately only in God.

In our desperate plight we cry to God but then when He answers we should be careful to THANK Him for His goodness and His wonderful works.

2) Those who sat in Darkness – vv. 10-16

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.

The waywardness of the people often found them in the bondage of “darkness” and “in the shadow of death”.

This second picture is thought to depict Israel’s history in the Babylonian Captivity. It was a miserable prison-like experience with no one to help them.

Again, they cried out to the LORD and He saved them out of their distresses bringing them out of this bondage.

One reason we think this is talking about the Babylonian Captivity is because Isaiah 45:2 uses this very same language showing how Cyrus would deliver them from the oppression of gates of bronze and bars of iron – referring to the Babylonian Captivity.

Slide # 2

Isaiah 45:2 (NKJV)

2 ‘I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces **the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron.**

And what is the called for appropriate response?

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

3) Those who Suffered their own Folly – vv. 17-22

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.
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.

The occasion here is indefinite. However, some think it may well have in view the condition of Israel at the time of Christ's first coming. The nation was not spiritually well. There was a godly remnant that was looking for deliverance.

Into that context God sent His word and healed them. This may be a veiled reference to Jesus Who is the Word and Who is the Healer. Many times in the gospels we read that Jesus healed them all.

Slide # 3

Matthew 8:16–17 (NKJV)

16 When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits **with a word**, and **healed all** who were sick,

17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: **“He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses.”**

Whatever the exact occasion, God is to be thanked for His healing mercies, for His goodness and wonderful works to the children of men!

4) Those who Experienced Sea Storms – vv. 23-32

Right here I think we have a clear intersect with the ministry of Christ. Christ's ministry was unique. Whereas the apostles also were empowered to do healing miracles and cast out demons, only Jesus did miracles over nature. This is uniquely God's domain with rare exception where Satan may at times be given permission to do a little something.

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.

The sea is a BIG reality and only a BIG God with awesome power can control the sea! God is in control of nature. He is ultimately in charge of storms – they are the “works of the LORD”. Puny man thinks he is in charge of the weather and so-called climate change. He is about to be humbled in the day of the Lord – he just doesn’t know it.

They are making plans like they are going to be around indefinitely not realizing the world is on a collision course with God’s judgment day. If you are concerned about global warming you really should read Revelation.

Slide # 4

Revelation 8:7 (NKJV)

7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. **And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.**

You talk about a scorched earth experience – this will be it. God is in control of nature – He is in control of the weather. It is blasphemy to speak of “mother nature” when only Father God is in charge. Notice what God does...

25 For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea.

Who does this? God does! “He commands” the stormy wind which lifts up the waves of the sea. This is God’s doing.

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.

Those out at sea in the midst of a storm know this experience. I can’t even begin to imagine how horrifying that must be.

Slide # 5



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.

In their peril they cry out to the LORD (YHWH) and He brings them out of it – He the LORD calms the storm and stills the waves. Again, this is the activity of God. Verse 24 calls it “the works of the LORD”, in verse 28-29 it is the LORD in response to their cry that calms the storm.

This has Jesus name written all over it. No other human in the history of the world ever did this apart of Jesus. This is God-stuff! This is His territory alone.

Slide # 6

Matthew 8:23–27 (NKJV)

23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him.

24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep.

25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!”

26 But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?”

Then **He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.**

27 So the men marveled, saying, “**Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?**”

Answer: Psalm 107. This is the works of the LORD. This is the LORD Who responds to the desperate plight of those who cry to Him in the storm on the sea! He the LORD is the One who “calms the storm, so that its waves are still.” Only Jesus ever did such a thing! Who can this be? Only the LORD Himself in a human body.

30 Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven.

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, And praise Him in the company of the elders.

And then the those delivered are glad as He guides them to their destination. *“Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!”*

God is to be greatly EXALTED and publicly worshipped for His acts of deliverance.

Note the HUGE emphasis on THANKSGIVING all the way through for what God in His lovingkindness does for His people.

Slide # 7

- v. 1 Oh give thanks to the LORD...
- v. 8 Oh that men would give thanks to the LORD...
- v. 15 Oh that men would give thanks to the LORD...
- v. 21 Oh that men would give thanks to the LORD...
- v. 22 Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving...
- v. 31 Oh that men would give thanks to the LORD...

What should the response of God’s people be for His acts of deliverance. We should constantly worship Him with THANKSGIVING! What can we really give God for all He does for us? Well, a key thing is the worship of THANKS! This is huge before God.

Slide # 8

Romans 1:21 (NKJV)

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, **nor were thankful**, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)

18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

I have often thought that people should be able to tell we are Christians simply by our attitude of gratitude which should permeate our whole Christian life.

To wrap up the Psalm the writer now paints with a BIG BROAD brush showing that God is sovereign over history. He can turn good times into bad times or bad times into good times. He is in charge of what happens.

C. The Sovereign LORD of Reversals vv. 33-42

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.

God can providentially turn rivers into a wilderness – fruitful land into a wasteland of barrenness in an act of judgment! If you mock the rain maker – don't be surprised that it doesn't rain.

On the other hand...

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.

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

God has the power to turn things around from destitution to prosperity and thus bless those who are right with Him. In the OT we see the recurring theme that He blesses obedience and judges wickedness.

And God has a way (in due time) of dealing with wicked leaders.

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

The idea of a "prince" is that of a ruler. Those leaders responsible for the affliction of God's people should be on notice. God pours contempt on them causing them to lose all respect and honor. God causes them to wander in a total wasteland representing a wasted and miserable existence.

Wicked leaders are like a mad junk yard dog that is vicious but he is on a chain that can only go so far and then God reels him in. They are headed for contempt and waste.

In the same way that God can turn a river into a dry wilderness, He can take the **princes** of this world and bring them low, causing them **to wander in the wilderness**. This is especially true of those rulers who subject God's people under **oppression, affliction, and sorrow**. – *David Guzik*

In contrast...

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

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

When the righteous see God turn the tables they rejoice. It is time to celebrate when God shuts the arrogant mouth of iniquity (sin).

When good men see this, they are profoundly glad. When the ungodly see it, they don't have a word to say (which is unusual for them). – *William MacDonald*

And He will do so – it's just a matter of time. People brag about how they are going to tell God a thing or two. In reality they are going to be as quiet as a stone (cf. Job 5:16).

Slide # 9

Isaiah 52:15 (NKJV)

15 So shall He sprinkle [or startle] many nations. **Kings shall shut their mouths at Him**; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

One day God is going to stop the mouth of iniquity in its tracks! Eventually every mouth will be stopped (Rom. 3:19) and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11).

The writer then concludes the Psalm with a wisdom principle.

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

The wise realize that in due time God turns things around. The wise wait upon Him to do so. God is in charge of the fortunes of mankind. The tenure of the wicked is limited. Eventually, it comes back on them. Eventually God will turn things around to where His people are in the position of prosperity. The wicked seemingly have their time where they have their way, but it is very limited.

In contrast when God reverses the roles the blessed place of His people will stand forever. We are the people of forever. We are living for what lasts – for what will endure forever. The wicked in their position of having the upper hand – only stand there for a moment. The wise will take this to heart and live accordingly.

When the Psalmist in Psalm 73 thought about the prosperity of the wicked it really troubled him. It seemed like everything went their way. But then he went into the presence of God and got a different perspective.

Slide # 10

Psalm 73:16–19 (NKJV)

16 When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me—

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; **Then I understood their end.**

18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.

19 Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as **in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.**

The wise consider the END of the matter! God is in the business of great reversals! He can turn the river into a barren wasteland and He can turn the wasteland into a lush rich land of plenty. In His providence He can turn things around – and eventually He will because His faithfulness to His own is enduring.

The wise will observe the ways of God and understand the “lovingkindness of the LORD”. This word “lovingkindness” is once again the rich Hebrew word “hesed”. The Psalm began with this emphasis and it ends there. Actually, this word is found 6 times through out the Psalm being translated as “mercy”, “goodness” and “lovingkindness”.

Slide # 11

- v. 1 “His mercy [hesed] endures forever.”
- v. 8 “thanks to the LORD for His goodness” [hesed]
- v. 15 “thanks to the LORD for His goodness” [hesed]
- v. 21 “thanks to the LORD for His goodness” [hesed]
- v. 31 “thanks to the LORD for His goodness” [hesed]
- v. 43 “understand the lovingkindness [hesed] of the LORD.”

God’s loving kindness is everlasting. This statement is the most repeated qualification of praise in the book of Psalms.

– ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

“Consider the successive vignettes of this psalm. Love broods over the weary caravan that faints in the desert; visits the prison-house with its captives; watches by our beds of pain; notices each lurch of the tempest-driven vessel; brings the weary hosts from the wilderness into the fruitful soil.” (F.B. Meyer)

God in His faithfulness is ever loyal to deliver His people and in the end their story is one of eternal deliverance. That is true for both Israel and His covenant people in the Church.

He in loyal covenant love guarantees it. The wise will consider this. And the wise will see that right in the heart of this Psalm emphasizing God’s hesed deliverance is the truth of the Messiah as seen in the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ Who controls the storms of life.

The painful riddle of this world finds its answer in the hesed (loyal covenant love of God) that endures forever.

The wise will observe these things and understand.

God help us to be among them!