

Psalm 103

- You'll notice that as we go through this Psalm, there aren't any requests or petitions - only praise for our Lord, only blessing to our God!
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V: 1 *"Bless the Lord"* 6X's in this Psalm, *"Bless the Lord, O my soul"* 3X's.

- The word "bless" is a little stronger than "praise". It is praising with adoration and thanksgiving, it's praising the Lord with a sincere love and a real adoration in your heart towards Him.

"Ib O my soul..." From my innermost being.

- The Psalmist often speaks to himself, to his own soul:

David was troubled and in trouble:

1 Samuel 30:6 "... But David strengthened himself in the Lord His God."

Psalm 42:5 "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance."

- He's saying get your eyes off of the problem and get your eyes on the Lord - maintain a proper focus.

1. If we focus on the issues or problems they will always seem too big.
2. If we look too close at other people we'll be disappointed and angry.
3. If we focus on ourselves we'll get depressed.

- But if we focus on the Lord, our problems shrink in size, other people, and even we ourselves just kind of fade away

"Ic All that is within me, bless His holy name!"

Matthew 22:37 "Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all our mind."

Luke 10:27 "... all your strength..."

"Id ... His holy name." Again just the acknowledgment that His name is Holy.

Exodus 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your god in vain..."

Isaiah 57:15 “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.”

- His name is sacred, His name is to be revered, and honored.

Proverbs 28:14 “Happy / blessed is the man who is always reverent...”

V: 2-5 Bless the Lord some more! (repetition = emphasis) Once you're in that mind set to bless the Lord, it's hard to stop!

- “*Forget not*” = remember all His benefits, His blessing upon us.
- God knows our weaknesses, one of which is that we tend to be forgetful, thus the exhortation - “don't forget.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

- As we remember, as we're mindful of what the Lord has done for us, it should provoke a response in our hearts towards Him.

Psalm 116:12-13 “¹²What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? ¹³I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.”

V: 3 The statements that follow could be punctuated by either an exclamation point, meaning these are just that, statements of fact. Or they could be punctuated with a question mark, being posed as a rhetorical question.

- I think about what Peter said after a seemingly difficult teaching from Jesus:

John 6:68 “... Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life?”

1. **Forgiveness**. Who forgives, who else forgives like our God?

Psalm 32:1-2 “¹Blessed (Oh how happy) is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ²Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.”

- The man that has received forgiveness of all his iniquities, that is what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about.

2. **Healing**. “**Jehovah-Rapha**” He is the Lord who heals!

- First the spiritual, (sin) now to the physical.

- Like the paralytic man lowered down through the roof in **Matthew 9** - first Jesus forgave his sins, then He healed his body.

Exodus 15:26 "... For I am the Lord who heals you." "Jehovah-Rapha"

V: 4 3. **Redeems**. Who gives us redemption! He is our Redeemer!

Job 19:25 "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth."

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Romans 3:24 "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

4. Who crowns us with **Lovingkindness**. (Gracious)

Psalm 25:6 "Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, for they are from old."

- Meaning they've been there from the beginning, because that is who He is!

5. Who gives us His tender **Mercy**.

Micah 7:18 "Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy."

Exodus 34:6 "... The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,"

V: 5 6. Who satisfies, gives us **Satisfaction**, provision.

- "mouth" is not the best translation; a more accurate translation would be "desires" - He satisfies our desires. He is our contentment, our fulfillment, He is our everything.

Psalm 107:9 "For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness."

- Sheep won't rest until they've been fed and watered, then they can rest, and be at peace. We're the same way. Until we're satisfied, content, resting in Him, that's when we know true peace, true rest.

Psalm 34:4 "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart."

- As we delight ourselves in the Lord, He becomes the desire of our heart - and He gives us more and more of Himself!

Psalm 34:10 "... those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing."

7. **Renewal.**

Isaiah 40:31 "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

Psalm 51:10 "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

- Only God can do that!

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

V: 6-7 God is a protector of the oppressed.

Proverbs 14:31 "He who oppresses the poor reproaches His maker."

- He's made known His ways to Moses, and to the children of Israel.
- How did He do that? Through His actions, and through His Words.

Deuteronomy 26:8 "So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders."

- He begins to list how He's done that.

V: 8 Merciful, gracious, slow to anger meaning He is patient, and did I mention that He abounds in mercy, He is overflowing in mercy!

Exodus 34:6-7a "6... The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,..."

- What a sad fallacy when people mis-characterize the God of the Old Testament saying that He is all wrath, and hellfire, and judgment when it's really just the opposite.

Psalm 36:5 “Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.”

V: 9 God will not always strive, or contend, or dispute - argue with His children, He'll act or move in a sovereign way.

Hebrews 12:5-6 “⁵And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.”

- He's never angry with us; this is what's known as an “anthropomorphism.” An attempt to describe what God is doing as we relate to it in human terms. Because we bear the brunt of what He is doing at the moment we think or relate to it in terms of anger when in actuality it is His loving kindness towards us.

Psalm 30:5 “For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.”

V: 10 Of a truth, He has not dealt with any of us according to what we deserve. He is merciful, and gracious, and longsuffering!

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death (that is what we deserve) but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (That is His grace and mercy!)

V: 11 How far are the heavens above the earth?

- More than can be calculated or measured. Scientists are discovering new galaxies that are 15 billion light years away and that number gets bigger as they discover more, they have certainly not found or discovered the end of it.
- But as God declares “*as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.*”

V: 12 In a similarly infinite way the Psalmist describes the forgiveness of God.

- If you start moving east or west - pick one, and continue in that direction on the earth - you are always moving in that direction, it never ends - and seemingly we never exhaust the forgiveness of God
- North and South both have limits, but East and West do not.

Micah 7:19 “... You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”

V:13 The Lord has pity for us, He has compassion, He is merciful towards us. He's just saying the same thing again for emphasis.

- As a father it's hard to see your children sick or injured, it's difficult to watch especially when their so small - your heart breaks for them - that is how the Lord feels towards us.

Lamentations 3:22-23 “²²Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. ²³They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.”

V: 14 He knows our frame, He knows our limitations - we expect way more of ourselves than He does. He knows that we're just dumb sheep.

Isaiah 53:6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way...”

V: 15-18 Man is very temporary, he is here lives his life, and is gone just that quick.

James 4:14 “...For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”

- ¹⁷Then the contrast: But the Lord is eternal, from everlasting to everlasting - and because He is eternal so is His mercy and His righteousness.
- But it is conditional: it's upon those who fear Him.

Proverbs 28:14 “Happy / blessed is the man who is always reverent...”

¹⁸Another condition: to those who keep His covenant and do His commandments.

James 1:22 “But be doers of the word, and not just hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

- Jesus said that there would be many who say “Lord, Lord, didn't we...” and He will say “depart from Me, I don't know you...” This would most likely be that group of people who were self deceived...
- The question that should come up is how can God be both merciful and righteous at the same time?
- In a certain sense He can't just forgive sin, if He's going to maintain His righteous standard at the same time then someone needs to pay the price for that sin - someone has to die.

Hebrews 9:22 “And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.”

- That is exactly where Jesus steps in, He pays the price, the righteous requirements are met in Jesus.

V: 19-22 The Lord has established His throne, His kingdom rules over all - and accordingly all should worship Him, praise Him, and bless Him.

- His throne, His reign, His power - all these things are already established and won't be changed by human or earthly events - we shouldn't expect any changes in heaven.

Psalm 90:2 “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

V: 20-21 Mighty angels who do His word - there is no question in heaven as to doing the will of God, fulfilling the Word of God.

Speaking of the angels:

Hebrews 1:14 “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation.”

- His “ministers” His servants, His true servants are those who do His pleasure.

Revelation 4:11 “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and for Your pleasure they exist and were created.”

V: 22 All His works, all creation should join in the heavenly chorus to “*Bless the Lord!*”

Psalm 98:4 “Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth: break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.”

Psalm 70:4 “Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; and let those who love Your salvation say continually, “Let God be magnified.”