

Psalms 103

This evening - we're continuing our overview of the Old Testament book titled Psalms.

With this as our focus - let's open our Bibles to Psalms chapter 103 - and as we make our way to the 103rd Psalm...

...I should take a moment to point out that this Psalm - which was written by king David...

...has been described as the best-known and best-loved of all the hymns.

And the reason why is because - it's a joyful Psalm that draws our attention...

...to the benefits that belong to those who trust in the Lord.

G. Campbell Morgan described this Psalm as the purest form of praise - by declaring...

It is perhaps the most perfect song of pure praise to be found in the Bible....

That's right - and the reason why is because - this Psalm which was written by King David...

...helps us to rejoice in the One - Who has blessed us with everlasting blessings.

John Stevenson presented his perspective of this Psalm - as he declared...

Innumerable blessings had been showered down from above in acknowledgment of David's supplications; and, therefore, an overflowing gratitude now bursts forth from their joyful recipient. He touches every chord of his harp and of his heart together, and pours forth a spontaneous melody of sweetest sound and purest praise.

This Psalm is - without debate -one of the purest forms of praise found in the entire Bible.

Spurgeon also described the incredible beauty of this Psalm - by declaring...

There is too much in the Psalm, for a thousand pens to write, it is one of those all-comprehending Scriptures which is a Bible in itself, and it might alone almost suffice for the hymn-book of the church.

Time would fail us to exhaust the incredible content of this Psalm.

And as we make our way through the text before us tonight...

...it's my prayer that we will all become those believers - who are quick to bless the Lord...

...from the deepest depths of our soul.

With this as our goal - let's turn our attention to the lyrics that we find here in the 103rd Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 1 - where we read...

Psa 103:1 A Psalm of David.

Bless the LORD, O my soul;

And all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Psa 103:2 Bless the LORD, O my soul,

And forget not all His benefits:

Psa 103:3 Who forgives all your iniquities,

Who heals all your diseases,

Psa 103:4 Who redeems your life from destruction,

Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

Psa 103:5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things,

So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Here in the beginning of this Psalm - we find King David - Blessing the LORD - from the depths of his soul.

And just to be clear - that word - soul - found there in verses 1 and 2 was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used in reference to the desires - appetites - emotions - and passions of a person.

This is the same word that Moses used - in Deuteronomy chapter 6 - it's beginning at verse 4 - where he declared...

Deu 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

Deu 6:5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

Those who trust in the Lord should not only love Him with our heart - and our strength...

...but - we should also love Him from the depths of our SOUL.

And being that the word - SOUL - refers to our desires - appetites - emotions - and passions...

...we should take a moment to ask - - do I really love the Lord - with my entire soul?

Do my desires reveal my love for the Lord - - or - are my desires in conflict with this command?

Are my appetites in line with the love of the Lord - - or do I still crave carnal things?

Do my emotions reflect my love for the Lord - or - are my feelings based on the flesh?

Are my passions based on my love for the Lord - or am I still passionate about this wicked world?

Christian - listen - those who truly love the Lord will all of their soul - will make sure that...

...our desires - appetites - emotions - and passions - are all in line with the will of our God.

And as we make sure that our desires - appetites - emotions - and passions - are in line with the will of our God...

...we will become those believers - who want to BLESS the holy name of the LORD...

...with everything that is within us.

You might like to know that - the word - Bless - found there in verses 1 and 2 - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used of those who kneel down - in order to praise the Lord.

The same word was used of those who bow before the Lord - as an act of adoration.

This is the same word that King David used - in 1st Chronicles chapter 29 it's verse 20 - where we learn that...

1Ch 29:20 David said to all the assembly, "Now bless the LORD your God." So all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king.

Now - as we consider this example - we will all do well to bless the Lord...

...as we remember all of the benefits that we've received from Him.

That word - Benefits - found there at the end of verse 2 - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which - in this context - was used of the acts - or - the work of the Lord.

Theologian Albert Barnes described the meaning of this word - as...

“...the Divine dealings, to what God had done, as a reason for blessing his name.”

That's right - as King David remembered all of the divine dealings of the Lord...

...he was led to bless the name of the Lord - from the depths of his soul.

With this as our focus - let's consider the list of benefits that King David presented - here in the beginning of this Psalm.

Look with me again - beginning there at verse 3 - where he declared...

Psa 103:3 Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,
Psa 103:4 Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
Psa 103:5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Here in these verses - we find King David - presenting a list of 5 benefits that the Lord provides to those who trust in Him.

This includes Remission - Glorification - Redemption -
Compassion - and Restoration.

Let's take some time to consider these benefits - one by one - look with me again - there at verse 3...

...it's there where David described the Lord as the One Who forgives all your iniquities.

Notice that the Lord doesn't forgive some of our sins — no — instead...

...He forgives ALL of our iniquities - according to Free gift of grace...

...which is received by faith in Jesus Christ.

Not only that - but - it's in the second half of verse 3 - where we learn that the Lord also heals all of our diseases.

I love the way that the prophet Isaiah put it - in Isaiah chapter 53 - it's verse 5 - where we learn that our Messiah was...

Isa 53:5. ...wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.

By the stripes of our Savior - those who trust in Him - will be healed from every sickness and every disease.

This prophetic promise will be finally - and forever fulfilled - on the day when we receive our glorified bodies.

Let's consider how the apostle Peter put it - in his first epistle - it's in 1st Peter chapter 2 - beginning at verse 24 - where we learn that Jesus...

1Pe 2:24 ...Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

1Pe 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

The Lord Jesus received the punishment that we deserve - so that those who trust in Him - can be glorified - body - soul - and spirit.

And as we remember this benefit - those who believe in Him should bless His holy name.

The third benefit that King David mentioned - is found there in 4 - where we learn that the Lord redeems our life from destruction.

That word - redeem - was translated from a Hebrew word - which was used of the kinsman-redeemer...

...who would pay the required ransom - by which a relative could be set free from indentured servitude.

It was there on the cross where our Kinsman-redeemer paid the price for our freedom.

And in this way - He redeemed us from destruction.

I like the way that Peter put it - in 1st Peter chapter 1 - it's beginning at verse 18 - where he declared...

1Pe 1:18 ...you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

1Pe 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Jesus Christ is the kinsmen-redeemer - Who paid our ransom - with His own blood.

He gave His life for us - so that we can live for Him.

And as we remember this benefit - those who believe in Him should bless His holy name.

The fourth benefit that King David mentioned - is found there in second half of verse 4 - where we learn that....

...the Lord is the One Who crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies.

That word - crowns - can also be rendered - encircles - - and what this means us that...

...the Lord encircles those who trust in Him - with lovingkindness and tender mercies.

In other words - He encompasses us with His love and compassion...

...and as we remember this benefit - those who trust in Him should bless His holy name.

The fifth benefit that King David mentioned - is found there in verse 5 - where we learn that...

...the Lord satisfies our mouth with good things - so that our youth is renewed like the eagle's.

In other words - the Lord's provision will bring restoration to those who trust in Him.

And this most certainly includes the grace of God that strengthens us - when we are weak.

With this benefit in mind - those who trust in the Lord should bless His holy name.

Not only that - but - we should also bless His holy name - for the way that he settles every account - according to what is right.

Let's consider how King David put it - here in the 103rd Psalm - look with me beginning there at verse 6 - where he declared...

Psa 103:6 The LORD executes righteousness
And justice for all who are oppressed.

Psa 103:7 He made known His ways to Moses,
His acts to the children of Israel.

Psa 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

Psa 103:9 He will not always strive with us,
Nor will He keep His anger forever.

Psa 103:10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

Here in these verses - we find King David - singing the praises of the One Who always does what is right...

...which includes the plan to execute justice for those who are oppressed.

That word - oppressed - found there at the end of verse 6 - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used of those who are violated or defrauded.

It also speaks of those who are the victims of violence...

...as well as those who have been extorted.

Now - I'm sure that we would all love for the Lord to execute justice for the oppressed - today.

Unfortunately - he is allowing the mystery of lawless to continue - and it's for this reason that...

...the world is currently filled with people who are oppressed.

Thankfully - there's coming a day when He will settle every account.

And it's at that point in time when He will execute everlasting justice.

At the same time - we can also rejoice in knowing that - the Lord is a Merciful God - Who is ready to save sinners.

Let's consider how King David put it - there in verse

Psa 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

While it's true that the Lord is a righteous Judge - who will eventually going to execute everlasting justice on those who will not repent...

...it's also true that He is a merciful Messiah - and a gracious God...

...Who is patiently giving every person the chance to repent - and trust in Jesus.

This was the way that Jonah described the Lord - after He forgave the repentant people of Nineveh.

It's in Jonah chapter 4 - in the middle of verse 2 - where Jonah declared...

Jon 4:2b ...I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.

Isn't it nice to know that - the righteous judge of heaven and earth is also a gracious God Who wants to save us?

And not only that - but - He also sent our merciful Messiah so that He could save us from the punishment we all deserve.

Let's consider how King David put it - here in our text tonight - look with me again - beginning there at verse 9 - where we learn that...

Psa 103:9 He will not always strive with us,
Nor will He keep His anger forever.
Psa 103:10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

What a relief it is - to know that the Lord will spare those who trust in Him - from the punishment that we deserve.

And even if we've sinned in such a way - that we've provoked Him unto anger...

...we can take comfort in knowing that He is quick to forgive those who repent.

And according to King David - the Lord will remove our transgressions - and remember them no more.

Let's consider how he explained it - here in the 103rd Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 11 - where King David declared...

Psa 103:11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Here in these verses - we find King David - describing the immeasurable mercy of our Messiah - towards those who fear Him.

Just to be clear - that word - fear - found there at the end of verse 11 was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used in reference to the reverence that is demonstrated by those who love the Lord.

And as for those who fear the Lord - He separates us from our sins - as far as the east is to the west.

Imagine that for a moment - if I am moving towards the east - - and my sins are heading towards the west...

...then - there is an increasing amount of separation from my sins.

And what's even better is that - the Lord has promised to blot them out...

...and remember them no more.

Let's consider how the Lord explained it - in Isaiah 43 - it's verse 25 - where He declared...

Isa 43:25 "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins..."

When we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ - he not only removes our sins - as far as the east is from the west...

...but - He also blots them out - and He chooses to forget all about it.

And while I'm sure we're all wondering how an omniscient God is able to forget our sins...

...I honestly don't know - - and yet - that's what He promised.

I like the way that Paul described the way that believers are cleansed from the stain of sin.

It's in 1st Corinthians chapter 6 - beginning at verse 9 - where he asked...

1Co 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,

1Co 6:10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

1Co 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Those who trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins - can rejoice in knowing that...

...we've been washed - and cleansed from the stain of our sin.

Not only - but we've been sanctified - and set apart for the glory of God.

And finally - we've been judicially justified - and declared to be righteous...

...according to the righteousness of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

In order to grasp the love that leads the Lord to provide us with this incredible gift of grace - let's consider how King David explained it - here in the 103rd psalm.

Look with me beginning there at verse 13 - where he declared...

Psa 103:13 As a father pities his children,
So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

Psa 103:14 For He knows our frame;
He remembers that we are dust.

God is like a loving father - who takes pity on His children - - and the reason why is because - He understands our weaknesses.

That word - pity - was translated from a Hebrew word - which speaks of affection - and compassion.

And according to King David - those who fear the Lord with reverential respect...

...will become the children who receive His affectionate compassion.

King David elaborated on the merciful love of the Lord - here in the 103rd Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 15 - where he declared...

Psa 103:15 As for man, his days are like grass;
As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.

Psa 103:16 For the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
And its place remembers it no more.

Psa 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting
On those who fear Him,

And His righteousness to children's children,

Psa 103:18 To such as keep His covenant,
And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

Here in these verses - we find King David - helping his audience to remember that...

...the days of every person are comparable to the grass of the meadow - and the flower of the field.

I'll remind you that - it was just eight months ago - when the bluebonnets we're in bloom.

And while we all enjoyed the beautiful wildflowers that covered the grassy edges of the highways...

...the flourish flowers are gone - and the grass is dying.

In similar fashion - our lives will come to an end here in this world.

And while this might seem like a reason to be sad - - King David assured us that...

...those who fear the Lord - will continue to enjoy His mercy - from everlasting to everlasting

Christian - listen - death is a doorway - that allows us to enter into the presence of Lord and Savior.

And in His presence is everlasting mercy - which we will enjoy forevermore.

With that being the case - we should take a moment to ask - how can we be sure that we truly fear the Lord?

In order to answer this question - let's take another look - beginning there at verse 17 - where David declared...

Psa 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting

On those who fear Him,

And His righteousness to children's children,

Psa 103:18 To such as keep His covenant,

And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

In order to grasp the point that King David was making - it's important for us to remember that...

...we're saved by grace through faith - - and NOT by the works of the law.

At the same time - those who have been saved by faith in Jesus Christ...

...will want to keep His commandments according to the new covenant.

I like the way that the Lord Jesus put it - in John chapter 14 - it's verse 15 where He declared...

Jhn 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments..."

Christian - listen - we don't keep the commandments to get saved.

No - instead - those who are saved will want to keep the commandments - because - we love our Savior.

And as we love the Lord with all our heart - with all our soul - and with all our strength...

...the Holy Spirit empowers us walk in the reverential respect...

...by helping us to keep to the commandments of Christ.

Those who fear the Lord will not only want to keep His commandments - but - we will also respect His authority over all creation.

Let's consider how King David explained it here in the 103rd Psalm - look with me - there at verse 19 - where we learn that...

Psa 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in heaven,
And His kingdom rules over all.

Let that sink in for a moment - The LORD has established His throne in heaven - And His kingdom rules over ALL.

Do you believe this - - I mean - do you really believe that the LORD is ruling over the entire creation - from His heavenly throne?

Or - are you living in fear of the current election - because...

...if the wrong people win in November - then - our nation is going to fall apart.

Please trust me when I tell you that the LORD is on the throne.

I like the way that the sons of Korah put it - in the 47th psalm - they put it like this...

Psa 47:1 Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples!
Shout to God with the voice of triumph!

Psa 47:2 For the LORD Most High is awesome;
He is a great King over all the earth.

The LORD is the great King Who rules over all the earth.

And it's for this reason that we can take comfort in knowing that the Lord will appoint the authorities that He chooses.

This was the point that Paul was making in Romans chapter 13 - it's beginning at verse 1 - where he declared...

Rom 13:1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Rom 13:2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

Rom 13:4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Rom 13:5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

Rom 13:6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

Rom 13:7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Christian - listen - we don't need to live in fear of our political leaders...

...and the reason why is because - the Lord is the One Who appoints them...

...and He is also the One Who removes them - according to His perfect plan.

With that being the case - we will all do well to vote our conscience according to the truth of God's word.

And then - let's pray for those who the Lord appoints - so that we might be able to live a peaceable life.

This was the point that Paul was making - in 1st Timothy chapter 2 - it's beginning at verse 1 - where he declared...

1Ti 2:1 I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,
1Ti 2:2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

No matter who wins on November the 3rd - let's pray for our political leaders...

...so that they might become believers - who are serving our Savior - according to His will.

At the same time - I encourage every Christ to spend less time worrying - and more time blessing the name of the Lord.

With this as our goal - let's consider the final verses of this Psalm - beginning there are verse 20 - where King David declared...

Psa 103:20 Bless the LORD, you His angels,
Who excel in strength, who do His word,
Heeding the voice of His word.

Psa 103:21 Bless the LORD, all you His hosts,
You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.

Psa 103:22 Bless the LORD, all His works,
In all places of His dominion.
Bless the LORD, O my soul!

Here in the final verses of this Psalm - we find King David - concluding this song - in the same way it began.

But rather than encouraging those who were singing this song to to bless the Lord...

...he turned His attention to the angels of the Lord - and the hosts of heaven - to bless the name of the Lord.

And listen - if anyone knows how to properly proclaim the blessing of the Lord...

...it's the angels who excel in strength and who do His word.

It's in Revelation chapter 5 - where we find John the revelator - describing the way that the angels bless the Lord - there in Heaven.

It's beginning at verse 11 - where he declared...

Rev 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

Rev 5:12 saying with a loud voice:
"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"

Rev 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power

Be to Him who sits on the throne,

And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

Rev 5:14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

Christian - listen - there's coming a day - when those who placed their faith in the cross of Christ...

...will gather together with the angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders...

...and we will bless the name of the Lord - as we proclaim His praises - forever - and ever.

And with that being the case - we will all do well to become those believers...

...who Bless the LORD from the depths of our soul...

...and with everything that is within us - let's bless His holy name!