

Celebrating the Lord's Redemption (Psalm 107)

Intro: All of our hearts are warmed by stories of rescue. Who among us has not been moved by the heroic effort of someone who risks his own life to save another? Today let's consider a psalm based on stories of deliverance and where the hero is God.

Psalm 107—the lovingkindness of the Lord

Exhortation to those redeemed from captivity to acknowledge what the Lord has done for them

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary, and gathered from the lands, from the east and from the west, (Psalm 107:1-3)

God's actions toward the exiles was just another example of the wonders of God's lovingkindness.

Four other amazing stories of redemption

How God helped lost people find their way (v. 4-9)

They wandered in the wilderness in a desert region; they did not find a way to an inhabited city. They were hungry and thirsty; their soul fainted within them. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble; He delivered them out of their distresses. He led them also by a straight way, to go to an inhabited city. (Ps. 107:4-7)

Can you imagine how these people must have felt to be in a condition of total confusion? Not knowing which way to turn and realizing that every hour they were nearer to death? Yet God in His love helped them find their way to a place where there were people and food. He saved their lives! They were redeemed by the Lord from their trouble. But now the psalmist shows what the appropriate response should be!

Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good. (Psalm 107:8-9)

How God helped prisoners become free again (v. 10-16)

There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, prisoners in misery and chains, because they had rebelled against the words of God, and spurned the counsel of the Most High. Therefore He humbled their heart with labor; they stumbled and there was none to help. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their bands apart.

In this case, those in prison were there because of their

rebellion against God. God allowed them to be brought into slavery to humble them and, in this condition they had no one to help them. Yet God in His gracious love, when they called out to him, helped them and brought them out of their slavery. They were redeemed by the Lord from their trouble. But now the psalmist shows what the appropriate response should be! *Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has shattered gates of bronze, and cut bars of iron asunder. (Psalm 107:10-16)*

How God helped those afflicted with disease to be healed (v. 17-22)

Fools, because of their rebellious way, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted. Their soul abhorred all kinds of food; and they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble; he saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. (Psalm 107:17-20).

In this case, again sin was a problem. They are called “fools” in the Biblical sense of those who rejected God’s wisdom. They were intent on doing their will and not God’s. The Lord allowed them to suffer the consequences of their sinful way of life. They fell prey to disease and were near death. But they called out to God and He healed them. They were redeemed by the Lord from their trouble. But now what did the psalmist urge them to do?

Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and tell of His works with joyful singing.

How God helped those perishing to be saved (v. 23-32)

Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters; They have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For He spoke and raised up a stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. They rose up to the heavens, they went down to the depths; their soul melted away in their misery. They reeled and staggered like a drunken man, and were at their wits’ end. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and He brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to be still, so that the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad because they were quiet; so He guided them to their desired haven. (Psalm 107:23-30)

As we read this story, we can feel the desperation of a ship and its crew as they find themselves in a great storm on the sea. They are at their “wit’s end”. They called out to the Lord and he calmed the storm and gave them safe harbor. They too were redeemed by the Lord from their trouble. But now what does the psalmist urge them to do!

Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! Let them extol Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him at the seat of the elders. (Ps. 107:31-32)

A lovingkindness founded upon the justice of God

Now as the psalmist thinks about the lovingkindness of the Lord he understands that it is also founded upon the justice of God.

He can reverse the circumstances of the wicked and righteous.

He changes rivers into a wilderness, and springs of water into a thirsty ground; A fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it.

He changes a wilderness into a pool of water, and a dry land into springs of water; and there He makes the hungry to dwell, so that they may establish an inhabited city, and sow fields, and plant vineyards, and gather a fruitful harvest. Also He blesses them and they multiply greatly; and He does not let their cattle decrease. (Psalm 107:33-38)

He can humble the exalted and exalt the humble

When they are diminished and bowed down through oppression, misery, and sorrow, He pours contempt upon princes, and makes them wander in a pathless waste.

But He sets the needy securely on high away from affliction, and makes his families like a flock. The upright see it, and are glad; but all unrighteousness shuts its mouth. (Psalm 107:39-42)

An Exhortation to consider the lovingkindness of the Lord

Who is wise? Let him give heed to these things; and consider the lovingkindnesses of the Lord. (Psalm 107:43)

If one is truly wise, he will learn the lesson taught by these examples and God's response to them. What are those lessons?

Lessons to be learned from this psalm of deliverance

People may suffer trouble in life for many reasons.

Our troubles may be because we are simply at the wrong place at the wrong time or the victim of misinformation.

But sometimes our troubles are the product of our own sin and rebellion against the Lord.

In either case, we need to humble ourselves before God and cry out for His help.

God cares about man in trouble even when that trouble is his own doing! God uses such circumstances to humble us and cause us to seek His help.

God mercifully redeems those who turn to Him. Throughout the psalm the psalmist extols the goodness or lovingkindness of the Lord. The OT word suggests His gracious love for mankind.

The redeemed should acknowledge God's love and express their thanks

to Him for His wonders.

So often we want God in our lives when we are in trouble. But what do we do when we are redeemed? Often those people who have been delivered by God go back to their old way of life!

The psalmist taught the redeemed to:

Offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving

Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving (Ps. 107:22)

Tell of His works in joyful singing, v. 22

“And tell of His works with joyful singing” (Ps. 107:22)

Be a part of the assembled worship of God’s people

Let them extol Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him at the seat of the elders. (Psalm 107:32)

Acknowledge the everlasting goodness and lovingkindness of the Lord

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, (Ps. 107:1-2)

Our Story of Redemption

As for us, we have even more reason to acknowledge the truths of this psalm.

Like those people in the desert, we were lost, but God helped us find our way.

“For the Son of man has come to seek and save the lost” (Lk. 19:10).

And we sing, “I once was lost, but now I’m found; was blind but now I see

Like those people in prison, we were slaves, but God set us free.

He who commits sin is a slave of sin (Jn. 3:34).

“...having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness” (Rom. 6:18).

Like those who were sick, we were wounded by sin but God healed us.

“And He himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24).

Like those people trapped in the storm, we were perishing, but God rescued us.

“Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him” (Rom. 5:9).

We have experienced the greatest wonder of all—God has not merely redeemed our life from death, but our soul from eternal death! How great is His lovingkindness toward us!

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Eph. 1:7).

What then should we do?

Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! (Ps. 107:8)

“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so”! Say what? “..For He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting (Ps. 107:1-2)

Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of His works with joyful singing. (Ps. 107:22)

Let them extol Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him at the seat of the elders. (Psalm 107:32)

Conclusion: Let us praise God joyfully and thankfully for what He has done for us. Let us do it in the congregation of God’s people. People through the years have asked me, “Do I have to attend all the services of the church?” Well here’s the best answer I can give to that question. If you haven’t experienced the lovingkindness of the Lord, then don’t come. If you don’t have a reason to praise God and thank Him in the congregation, don’t come! But if you do...

Finally to those not Christians, how are you showing your gratitude for what the Lord has done for you? Have you experience the redemption of the Lord?