

## PSALM 107

Though this psalm marks the beginning of the fifth book of the Psalter, it nevertheless is closely related to the two psalms that precede it. Psalm 105 leads the reader through Israel's history to the time of the Exodus. Psalm 106 carries him along to the time of the Babylonian captivity. Psalm 107 takes up the sequence by referring to the Babylonian exile and Israel's restoration from it. The restoration was not only one of a great number of instances of the steadfast love of Yahweh, but it was *the* outstanding example and presents a theme inexhaustibly rich.

The psalm is divided into six sections. The first (vv. 1-3) addresses the psalm to the redeemed who have been gathered from the captivity. What then follows, in a series of four successive life situations, merely presents the restoration figuratively from the point of view of each of these. The exile was much like having a caravan lost in the wilderness and straying about aimlessly (vv. 4-9). It was also like an imprisonment (vv. 10-16). The restoration from exile was very much like a recovery from severe illness (vv. 17-22), and it surely cannot be denied that the deliverance had many points of similarity with the deliverance of a ship at sea from the dangers of a great storm which threatened the life of all aboard (vv. 23-32). In the last section (vv. 33-42), a presentation of God's providential government of men in all manner of situations is set forth. The Psalmist closes, in verse 43, declaring that those who study the works and ways of Yahweh shall be sure to see and praise his goodness.

- 1 Oh give thanks to YAHWEH, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.
- 2 Let the redeemed of YAHWEH say so,  
whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary
- 3 and gathered from the lands,  
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.
  
- 4 They wandered in the wilderness in a desert region;  
they did not find a way to an inhabited city.
- 5 *They were* hungry and thirsty; their soul fainted within them.
- 6 Then they cried out to YAHWEH in their trouble; He delivered them out of their distresses.
- 7 He led them also by a straight way, to go to an inhabited city.
- 8 Let them give thanks to YAHWEH for His lovingkindness,  
and for His wonders to the sons of men!
- 9 For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.
  
- 10 There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
prisoners in misery and chains,
- 11 because they had rebelled against the words of God  
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.

12 Therefore He humbled their heart with labor;  
they stumbled and there was none to help.  
13 Then they cried out to YAHWEH in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses.  
14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death and broke their bands apart.  
15 Let them give thanks to YAHWEH for His lovingkindness,  
and for His wonders to the sons of men!  
16 For He has shattered gates of bronze and cut bars of iron asunder.

17 Fools, because of their rebellious way, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted.  
18 Their soul abhorred all kinds of food, and they drew near to the gates of death.  
19 Then they cried out to YAHWEH in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses.  
20 He sent His word and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.  
21 Let them give thanks to YAHWEH for His lovingkindness,  
and for His wonders to the sons of men!  
22 Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and tell of His works with joyful singing.

23 Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters;  
24 they have seen the works of YAHWEH, and His wonders in the deep.  
25 For He spoke and raised up a stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea.  
26 They rose up to the heavens, they went down to the depths;  
their soul melted away in *their* misery.  
27 They reeled and staggered like a drunken man, and were at their wits' end.  
28 Then they cried to YAHWEH in their trouble, and He brought them out of their distresses.  
29 He caused the storm to be still, so that the waves of the sea were hushed.  
30 Then they were glad because they were quiet, so He guided them to their desired haven.  
31 Let them give thanks to YAHWEH for His lovingkindness,  
and for His wonders to the sons of men!  
32 Let them extol Him also in the congregation of the people,  
and praise Him at the seat of the elders.

33 He changes rivers into a wilderness and springs of water into a thirsty ground;  
34 a fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it.  
35 He changes a wilderness into a pool of water and a dry land into springs of water;  
36 and there He makes the hungry to dwell, so that they may establish an inhabited city,  
37 and sow fields and plant vineyards, and gather a fruitful harvest.  
38 Also He blesses them and they multiply greatly,  
and He does not let their cattle decrease.  
39 When they are diminished and bowed down through oppression, misery and sorrow,  
40 He pours contempt upon princes and makes them wander in a pathless waste.  
41 But He sets the needy securely on high away from affliction,  
and makes *his* families like a flock.  
42 The upright see it and are glad; but all unrighteousness shuts its mouth.

43 Who is wise? Let him give heed to these things,  
and consider the lovingkindnesses of YAHWEH.

#### PRAYER

*Lord God Almighty, we, like Israel, have been brought low through heaviness and sorrow. We have rebelled against you and lightly regarded your counsels. We have walked and sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, being fast bound in the captivity and misery of sin. Yet you have had mercy on us, drawing us to yourself through the Holy Spirit, and giving us saving faith in the atonement of your dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Keep us ever watchful, working zealously in your service, using that talent you have entrusted to us, until the day when we are called to our eternal rest, where we will worship you, Yahweh, the triune God, with everlasting praise and gratitude. Amen.*