



[Psalms 107-108](#)

Psalm 107-108
Tape #7202
By Chuck Smith

This begins what is called the fifth book of the psalms; they are divided into these books. This is called Deuteronomy. I suppose because it corresponds with the fifth book of the Torah. The psalmist begins this psalm as psalm one hundred and six with a call to give thanks.

O GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever (107:1).

The goodness of the Lord is going to be recounted to us throughout the chapter. The goodness of the Lord is his responding to the call of his people for help. In their distress they cried unto the Lord and the Lord heard and delivered. So God's goodness in delivering his people from their distresses. The mercy of the Lord will be demonstrated through this psalm in the fact that he does get us out of our trouble, which, for the most part are our own faults.

As we go through this psalm we will see how that our folly gets us into trouble, we are distressed, we cry to the Lord, he hears and he delivers. The goodness of God and the mercy of God will be declared to us through this psalm. So the encouragement of the people to give thanks to the Lord for his goodness and for his mercy that endures forever. Over and over again though we, by our own folly, get into trouble, we cry to God and he gets us out. His mercy endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, (107:2).

That is let the redeemed of the Lord declare his mercy that it endures forever.

whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; (107:2).

Redemption, a glorious thing. One of the blessings of God to us is the fact that he has redeemed us from the power of darkness, from the power of sin. I was a slave to the flesh and I was a slave to sin but Jesus Christ paid the price of my redemption. So Peter tells us that "We are redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold from that empty life that we used to live but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ". Again, in Revelation five when the redemption will become complete, we read that

"As Jesus takes the scroll out of the right hand of him who is sitting upon the throne the twenty four elders come forth with their golden vials filled of odors, which are the prayers of the saints and they offered them unto the Lord. They sang a new song saying Thou art worthy to receive the glory and the praise and the honor for thou art worthy to take the scroll and loose the scrolls thereof. For thou hast redeemed us by thy blood out of nation, tribe, kindred and people and hath made us unto our God kings and priests and we shall reign with thee upon the earth".

In the first chapter of Ephesians, as Paul is recounting for us the spiritual blessings that we have, one at the top of the list there is that "redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins". The idea of redemption is purchasing something that was lost. You were lost but Jesus purchased you and you've been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. You don't have to live as a slave to the flesh or to sin anymore. The price of your redemption has been paid through Jesus Christ.

Paul tells us in Romans eight that we and “All of creation groan and travailed together until now as we are waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God to wit, the redemption of this body”. Now that’s my problem, I have a redeemed spirit but I’m living in an unredeemed body and that creates quite a conflict. My body is of the flesh and still has the desires and the motions of the flesh. My spirit has been redeemed and has the longings and the desires towards God. My flesh is fighting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, these two are contrary. So I groan and travail “Oh God how long till you free me from this body of flesh, until I have that new body; the building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens and that wont be subject unto the things of the flesh and wont have those desires of the flesh?”

Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; (107:2).

Satan who held us captive. Of course in the sense of the scripture here, God had redeemed his people out of their Babylonian captivity. This first reference is to those who were redeemed from their captivity in Babylon.

And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south (107:3).

The word “south” in the Hebrew is “seas”. So the areas across the Mediterranean where they had been scattered.

They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; (107:4).

A single path actually.

They found no city to dwell in (107:4).

They were wandering in the pathless wilderness, lost and no city to dwell in.

Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them (107:5).

It can become very distressing, it can become very difficult when you’re hungry and thirsty, and you are faint and weak. Thus there in that wilderness they were fainting and weak, their souls fainting in them.

Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses (107:6).

The interesting thing in all of these to me is that they don’t cry unto the Lord until they are really at the bottom. I wonder why that is so. As long as we have strength it seems that we struggle, as long as there’s another angle it seems that we are going to try to work it. Why is it that we wait until we are at the end of the rope before we call unto the Lord? Here they are lost in the wilderness, they are fainting and they are about gone then they call unto the Lord as a last resort and his mercy endures forever. The Lord hears them and he delivers them out of all of their distresses.

And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation (107:7).

They were lost, they couldn’t find their way but God led them by the right way. It is so good to commit our lives and our ways to the Lord so that he will lead us in the right way. There used to be a hymn that was sung years ago in the church, years and years ago, even before my time. The verse said “Which way shall I go cries a voice in the night. I’m a pilgrim of weary and spent is my light. To the right, to the left on me if I knew. The way is so dark and the travelers so few.” In response there comes, “Nearer, nearer thee my friend is the old wayside cross covered with liken and moss. It’s cross beam shall point to the” well I lost it but it’s been years and years ago. So often we find ourselves at that crossbow of which way shall I take. I want to take the right way. How good it is to commit your ways unto the Lord and know that he will direct your path. Lord you show me the right way.

Here they were lost in the wilderness, they were fainting, they were weary, they were distressed and they cried unto the Lord and the Lord led them by the right way to the city of habitation. Then this oft repeated refrain, we are going to get it several times.

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (107:8).

We should not take the blessings of God for granted. We should always be careful to give God praise and thanksgiving for the work that he does in our lives.

When ten lepers came to Jesus seeking to be healed Jesus said, "Go your way and show yourself to the priest". This was the first step of restoration back into society after a leper was healed. As they were going to the priest, in faith at the command of Jesus, they discovered that their leprosy was gone. In that discovery, one of them turned and came running back to Jesus to give thanks to the Lord for healing him from this loathsome incurable disease. Jesus said "Where there not ten who were cleansed? Where are the nine?" That probably is a pretty good average.

Out of people who have received the blessings from God, the goodness of God and the answers to prayer maybe one in ten stop to give thanks and say "O Lord, I appreciate that". We are so prone when God delivers us to attribute it to natural causes. "Well I just figured they would come through. That's great". We are so prone to just attribute the work of God in delivering when we cry, we pray and we've done everything we can, we are at our wits end and we say "God help! Help!" and God helps then we say, "O never mind Lord. I just got a call and I won a new car so never mind Lord things worked out".

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (107:8).

It's because God so often and usually works in our lives in very natural ways. There is seldom this flash of brilliant light and you're thrown on ground and God demonstrates his power and you're shaking and open your eyes to find the answer to your prayer. He works things in such natural ways that the danger is our failure to recognize it as the work of God and to attribute then to natural causes and we don't praise him for his goodness and to his wonderful works to the children of men.

For he satisfieth the longing would, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness (107:9).

These are the two things; the satisfying of our thirsty soul and the filling of our hungry soul with goodness. Oh that we would praise God for satisfying our thirsty souls and filling our lives with goodness.

Now he gives to us the first where those who were taken captive to Babylon wandering.

Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; (107:10).

Bound in bars of iron, bound by affliction and people sitting in the shadow of death. Why?

Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High: (107:11).

Their problem is of their own doings. They are in this condition because they rebelled against God's word. They contemned the counsel of God, they ignored it, and in fact they despised it. Contemned is actually despising God's counsel. So because of that they are in trouble, they are sitting in darkness in the shadow of death; they're bound in afflictions and irons.

It describes a lot of people today in a figurative sense. There are a lot of people today who have despised the counsel of God, they have disobeyed the commandments of God and as a result they find themselves in slavery to sin. They are in chains, so to speak, of darkness as the power of darkness holds them in its grasp. They are being destroyed by the things that they are doing that they can't stop doing. There are several areas of illustration of people today being destroyed because of their disobedience to God. Marriage is being

destroyed because of disobedience to God. They rebelled against the word of God and they despised his counsel.

Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down and there was none to help (107:12).

Their fault totally. Despising God's counsel, despising the commandment of the Lord.

Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses (107:13).

His mercy endureth forever. Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord for his goodness and that his mercy endures forever. So here they are in trouble by their own doings and yet when they cried to the Lord out of their distress ready to die in prison, in bondage, God hears and God saves them from their distresses.

He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder (107:14).

Oh how glorious is God's work of delivering those who are captive to sin, breaking the chains that bind you and the powers of darkness that hold you. How glorious it is that God can take a man that the world has written off, the world has said he is hopeless and nothing can be done because his brain is scrambled and there is nothing; he's so bound by the alcohol or so bound by the drugs or so bound by these habits that you know the glorious power of Jesus Christ can set a person free in just a moments time. They cried to the Lord in their distress and God brought them out of darkness, out of the shadow of death and broke the bonds asunder.

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder (107:15-16).

Brass is always a symbol of judgement. The things that you did was wrong and they were against the law of God, against the counsel of God that you contemned and yet though the judgement of God was upon your life, when you cried unto the Lord there was forgiveness and deliverance. He broke the bonds, the chains, and the bars of iron.

The next group that we come across are fools.

Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted (107:17).

When you transgress the law of God, when you give yourself over to living a sinful riotous life, it has its natural consequences upon you. They were afflicted; it was their fault. This affliction is a physical affliction.

Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; (107:18).

They just don't want to eat. They are so sick that the thought of food is loathsome to them. So their soul abhors food.

and they draw near unto the gates of death (107:18).

They are dying. Their sickness is a result of their own iniquity. Maybe a sexually transmitted disease, they were engaged in promiscuous sexual activities, they picked up a venereal disease which is killing them and they are just about ready to die. Now it's their fault, you can't really blame God for the condition; it's because of their transgressions.

Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses (107:19).

In this state they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and he saves them out of their distresses. Again, here they are ready to die at their own fault but the mercy of God endures forever. Another demonstration of God's mercy though it is your fault and you are to blame yet when you call unto the Lord because his mercy endures forever God will be merciful unto you, God will forgive you, God will deliver you and God will heal you. Oh how good is God.

He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions (107:20).

Glorious. Even those who are there, no one to blame but themselves and their own rebellion against God and yet God is so merciful that when you call upon him he'll heal. "He sent his word and healed them" (107:20). You know, how many times has God brought healing to my life through the word? As I prayed there would be just a scripture that would come, that would minister to my heart, a promise and I would just lay claim to that promise. God would send his word and I would lay claim to that word and I would find healing.

Ho that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice [offer] the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing (107:21-22).

In Hebrews we are told to "offer to him the sacrifice of praise even the fruit of our lips". I think that that's what the psalmist is saying, offer to him the sacrifices of thanksgiving. That is the giving of our thanks, let that be a pleasing and acceptable offering unto God.

Now he's talking about sailors.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; (107:23).

They that do their business by crossing the great waters of the Mediterranean.

These [people] see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof (107:24-25).

I've seen that Mediterranean really churn in the storms.

They mount up to the heaven, (107:26).

That is on the top of the wave. It's a little ship that is carried up on the top of the wave and it looks like they are going right up to heaven. They go into the trough between the waves. Looking at them from the beach you would see them way up on a wave and then you can't see them because they are lost in the trough between the waves.

they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end (107:26-27).

We read how that when Paul was in the ship there in the Mediterranean when the storm came up how they did everything they knew to ride out the storm. They threw out all the cargo, they then threw out all the tackling, they got the ship as light as possible so it would ride high on the water and they were doing their best to ride out the storm. Finally they were at their wit's end, they finally despaired and said "We've had it, this is it".

For fourteen days they were being tossed there in the Mediterranean and on that evening the Lord stood by Paul and said "Paul you're going to make it. Tomorrow the ship is going to be wrecked but there will be no loss of life because you've got to get to Rome. I want you to witness to Nero". So in the morning here they are all been spared of life, it's all over and they are lying around sick and gloomy. Paul says, "Cheer up fellows we are going to make it. The Lord stood by me last night, the one that I serve, and he assured me that we are going to make it. There won't be a loss of life, we'll lose our ship but there won't be a loss of life".

Shortly after that they thought they heard the waves crashing on a beach and they sounded and found that the water was getting shallower and there were some sailors who decided to get into a little boat, one of the life boats, and make it to shore. Paul said to the Centurion “If those guys leave, we won’t make it” so the Centurion ordered them to cut the ropes to the little ship and let it go in the sea. The ship ran aground, the waves began to break it up but every guy grabbed onto a plank and floated into shore and not a loss of life though the ship was wrecked there on the island of Malta.

Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble (107:28).

Why is it that we wait until we get to our wit’s end, no place else to turn no one else to go to, it’s hopeless that we try God? It’s amazing how we’ll try everything. We try stuff that we don’t have much confidence in but we tried it all so we might as well try that.

Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! (107:28-31).

I sometimes wonder if God doesn’t let us just expend ourselves and get to our wit’s end just so we’ll call on him. Some of us just never call upon the Lord unless we are in trouble. The Lord says, “Well I haven’t heard from them for a while, let them alone, let them go to their own devices for a bit”. Man, things begin to fall apart and disasters then we cry “Lord, Lord”. He says, “Oh hi, I haven’t seen you for a while. It’s nice to hear from you. Sit down. Let’s talk.” “Oh what needless pain we bare all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer”.

Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders (107:32).

So the congregation of the people, when we gather together our purpose is to exalt the Lord, our purpose is to praise him in the assembly.

The rest of the chapter is devoted to just the works of God, his marvelous works and his powerful works.

He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground; (107:33).

There are areas of the earth that were once very lush beautiful areas that are now wilderness. The area of Sodom and Gomorrah was glorious, beautiful and lush and yet because of the sin God turned it into a wilderness. He dried up the rivers and the springs and the place became a barren wilderness.

A fruitful land into barrenness, for [because] the wickedness of them that dwell therein (107:34).

Surely Sodom and Gomorrah is a classic example of this.

He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings (107:35).

God can work one way or the other. He can take a wilderness and turn it into a lake and dry ground into watersprings.

*And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation:
And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, (107:36-37).*

They always felt that the two essentials for life were bread and wine. The vineyards were for the wine, the sowing of the fields were for the wheat for the bread.

which may yield fruits of increase. He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease (107:37-38).

God's watchful hand over his children.

Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow. He poureth contempt upon the princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way. Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock. The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth (107:39-42).

The psalmist now closes by saying,

Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, (107:43).

How that God is in control. How he can bring down the wicked and sustain the righteous. Whoever is wise will observe these things.

even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD (107:43).

Psalm one hundred and eight is a compilation of two psalms; psalm fifty-seven and psalm sixty. Psalm fifty-seven beginning with verse seven is very similar to verse one of this psalm; verse eight, nine, ten and eleven of psalm fifty-seven are the same as the first five verses here. Psalm sixty, beginning with verse five going through verse twelve are similar or exactly alike to verse six through thirteen here in this psalm. Having covered psalm fifty-seven and psalm sixty we've already looked at these. However it is interesting the similarity as the psalmist is picking out psalms for the hymnal, he puts a couple of the psalms together and makes this psalm out of two of the previous psalms.

O GOD, my heart is fixed: (108:1).

That is something that we need, a stable commitment to the Lord. We sing "I have decided to follow Jesus" to make that kind of a commitment. Lord, my heart is fixed, I've set my heart on thee. I'm going to serve you Lord no matter what, my heart is fixed.

I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations (108:1-3).

I've determined to praise the Lord, my heart is fixed. I'm going to declare his glory and sing his praises.

For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth; (108:4-5).

A repeat of psalm fifty-seven but it's worth while repeating. It's a declaration, the determination of I'm going to praise God and I'm going to exalt him for his mercy and his truth.

Now beginning with verse six we have psalm sixty beginning with verse five.

That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me. God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete [measure] out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head: Judah is my lawgiver; (108:6-8).

The declaration of God's delivering the land unto his people. The area of Shechem that became part of Ephraim, Succoth to east, Gilead on the other side of Jordan where Gilead, Manasseh and Ruben half the tribe of Manasseh settled. Ephraim, the power of the northern kingdom and Judah the lawgiver, the tribe from which the king David came.

Moab is my washpot; (108:9).

They were the enemy. The "washpot" is a term of scorn or derision. Moab, their enemies, is my wash basin.

over Edom will I cast out my shoe; (108:9).

The idea is the disdain for the enemies.

over Philistia [Philistines] will I triumph. Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts? (108:9-11).

Who is going to lead us? Then the prayer, Will you lead us? Will you go with us as we go out against the enemies.

Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man (108:12).

Oh that we would learn that that we would learn to turn to God for help. How often we turn to man but vain is the help of man. You see, all of us are in the same boat. We need God's help. In another psalm the psalmist said "Lord it's time for you to work". The help of man is vain.

Through God we shall do valiantly: (108:13).

God will lead us. Through him we will do valiantly.

for he it is that shall tread down our enemies (108:13).

The Lord is my strength, the Lord is my helper and the Lord is with me. "If God is for me, who can be against me?" So through God we will do valiantly and we shall tread down the enemies. When you take God as your fortress, as your refuge, as your strength, you can stand against all powers of darkness. Jesus said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against his church". You are his, you belong to him. Through our God we will do valiantly for it is he who will tread down our enemies. Oh how thankful I am that he's on my side. The Lord is with me, I shall not fear what man can do to me.

Father we thank You again tonight for Your marvelous word and the privilege Lord of studying the word. Help us Lord that we will be doers of the word and not hearers only. That as we go home tonight, even as we go, that we will be giving thanks Lord unto You for Your goodness and for Your mercy that endures forever. Lord, help us that we might praise Thee. Fill our hearts and our lips with praises Lord, for Your goodness and Your wonderful works unto us and for us. Thank You Lord for being there when we need You. Thank You Lord for answering when we call. Thank You Lord for delivering us out of our trouble and out of our distresses because Lord we do admit that so often our trouble and our distresses come from our own disobedience and our own self-willed ways. Yet Lord You are so merciful. Your mercy endures forever and we thank You for it, in Jesus name Amen.