

Psalm 105-106

Psalms 105 and 106 finish out the 4th out of the 5 books of the psalms. In reality they're what we might consider to be "hymns of history." They recount the history of the nation of Israel through 2 different lenses, from 2 different focal points. Psalm 105 emphasizes the *faithfulness* of God, His providential care and protection of the nation and it's patriarchs. Psalm 106 focuses more on the *failure* of Israel to really walk *with* and submit themselves in obedience *to* the Lord. No doubt all of our lives would to greater and lesser degrees be much the same story. A testimony to the faithfulness of God, His grace, His providential care, provision and protection; and our fickle and seemingly unstable nature along life's way, God's goodness, our stubbornness, God following through, us falling short; all the more reason that we should be humbled *before* God and lift up our lives in praise *to* God.

Vs1-6

So a multifaceted exhortation to the people of God *to* glorify, magnify and give praise *to* God. You see these Vs are in reality the appropriate response to the summation of this psalm. After you read *through* it and meditate *on* it how is it that we should respond *to* it? What's the response is fitting to the "promise keeping, protecting, and providing" hand of God upon our lives?

#1 (Vs 1) "Give thanks to the Lord" whether it be in your own personal time devotionally or perhaps with your family, be it in prayer privately it's always appropriate to give God thanks. As a matter of fact it's the will of God for you and me that we should be thankful; and understandably so considering all that He's done for us in Christ. Paul told the Colossians, "*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*" Col 3:15 and Again to the Thessalonians, "...*in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*" 1 Thess 5:18

#2 Call upon His name and #3 make known His deeds among the people. You're never going to go wrong when you're calling *upon* the Lord or spreading the good news *about* the Lord. When you're testifying on His behalf, sharing His goodness and His grace with others. In light of what He's done for you it seems only fitting that you would make known His matchless grace to others. When you see a good movie, or hear a good radio station, it's a quick and common response to tell others about it. Yet how often we refrain from speaking of the goodness of God. "Make known His deeds among the people."

What's a 4th fitting response to the faithfulness of God, His provision and protection for my life? Vs 2, "Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him." God has placed within us the capacity to sing, to play instruments, to create melody (or at the very least a "joyful noise"). You know what that tells me? That God likes music; and having gifted us in such a capacity what higher means is there concerning the gift of music than to offer it back in service and worship and praise to Him who placed the very capacity within us in the 1st place? O how we should sing to the Lord, over and over again the scriptures exhort us to *praise* the Lord, to sing and make melody to the Lord, to worship God in song; He's so faithful, it's only fitting that we would joy His heart in song.

Here's another one, "Talk of all His wondrous works!" Count your blessings. Converse with your family or with those in the body about God's goodness, or His mighty works, His power and majesty, it's edifying to you and glorifying to God. As a matter of fact the scripture alludes to the fact that God eaves drops when you talk about Him with someone. God listens in when people are talking about Him and He places those things in a book of remembrance. Check out Mal 3:16, "*Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name.*" Isn't that interesting? You wonder if those conversations will be recounted at some point in eternity; God keeps record of your conversations *about* Him, it's pleasing *to* Him.

Here's a couple more things you can do (Vs 3) "Glory in His holy name and let your heart rejoice in seeking Him." Practice the cultivation of His presence, seek Him, not as though He's lost, but it speaks of coming before Him again and again. How do we do that? How do we seek the Lord? I think the 1st and foremost way to seek the Lord is through the searching and studying of the scripture. Remember the word of the Lord in Heb 10:7? "*Then I said, 'Behold, I have come — In the volume of the book it is written of Me —'*" The best place to find Him is in the word, of course seeking God through prayer is wise as well, praying *to* God, spending time in the word *of* God is really/primarily the way that we seek after God. "Glory in His holy name" not in our accomplishments, or the fact that we're so cool or have great skill or perhaps a lot of money, glory in *His* holy name. As we read in Ps 20:7, "*Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.*" We read in Jeremiah Ch 9, "*Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,' says the Lord.*" Jeremiah 9:23-24 "Glory in His holy name" of course Paul said to the Galatians, "*But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*" Galatians 6:14 Our focus should be *on* Him and all the glory should be given *to* Him.

Vs4-5

So rejoice *in* the Lord, seek *after* the Lord remember the works and the word *of* the Lord, it's all a fitting response to His providential care, His promise keeping and protecting hand upon us and His goodness toward us. It doesn't get a whole lot more practical than that. Now it comes down to this doesn't it? Am I going to be a doer of the word, or a hearer only? The blessing isn't found in merely hearing it but in *doing* it. Be one who purposes in your heart to be a *doer* of the word.

Vs7-12

Here the psalmist begins to rehearse their national history beginning at its origin, "The covenant which He made with Abraham." The covenant in which God swore that He would bless him and multiply his seed, that He would give him the land of Canaan and that in him all the nations of the earth would be blessed (a reference to the Messiah Himself coming through the seed of Abraham).

2 Things quickly in this particular portion that I want to draw your attention to. #1 We note that God has a special relationship to Israel, yet simultaneously He's not limited to being a "national deity." He exercises sovereign rule over all the earth (Vs 7) "His judgments are in all earth." Is He the God of Israel? Absolutely. Is He Israel's God exclusively? Absolutely not.

#2 I would draw your attention to the 1st ½ of the 8th Vs. "He remembers His covenant *forever*." Now the interpretation of this passage belongs to God's covenant with the nation of Israel, the application however that I'm going to make concerns the covenant that God made with you and me through Christ. It was those words that came through the lips of our Lord Himself when at the last supper we read, "*Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*" Matt 26:27-28 And I'm so glad that God remembers His covenant *forever*, His covenant with us in Christ is everlasting, we've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb...

Vs13-22

The psalmist takes us from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Jacob, and from Jacob to Joseph illustrating God's providential protection and provision all along the way in the keeping of His promise. Over and over again the scriptures demonstrate that God is not a man that He should lie if He says it He'll do it, God keeps His word to you and to me.

He rebuked kings for their sake, told Abimelech to keep his hands off Sarah (Ab's wife), rebuked Pharaoh for her sake as well, He rebuked Laban when he pursued Jacob. As for Joseph by the time God called for the famine He already had Joseph in place so that he might be instrumental in bringing the family to Egypt where He would bless and multiply them.

Now there's a whole story in this section alone which we won't exhaust in detail. But Joseph's story is one that is worthy of study on your own time, so much of the providential sovereignty of God on display in his life, so many parallels to the life of Christ. Rejected by his own but accepted by God, the one whom they rejected the 1st time they bowed before and accepted at his "2nd appearing" they wept over how they treated him, he was beloved of his father, on and on it goes, envied by his brethren and all the rest.

But God had promised Joseph that his family would one day bow before him, however He didn't inform him of the details that surrounded that and what would make for the circumstances to bring that about. It would be envy and a family fight that would send Joseph to Egypt but that would be the very means that God would use to save them. What they meant for evil God meant for good to save many alive. But while Joseph was there he would be tried, tested and brought low. There's no exception we see it time and time again in the kingdom of God suffering precedes glory and before you're exalted you're exalted over people you're 1st the servant *of* people, before honor is humility. In this passage Joseph goes from friendless to fettered, from fettered to forgotten, and from forgotten in prison to being freed and exalted over the nation of Egypt and really over the whole world since Egypt was the most powerful nation on the earth at that time. Then came the famine, the famine brought the boys to Egypt and there it was that they bowed before Joseph just as God had promised.

But here's what we need to see (Vs 19). "Until the time that Holy Spirit word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him." What's that mean? It means that God gave to Joseph His word, but he couldn't connect the dots between being sold into slavery, lied about, being put in prison and forgotten about, and somehow ruling or being placed in a position of power and authority whereby even his own family bowed before him.

He was tested between God's promise and it's practical fulfillment, the 2 didn't seem to come together. Yet God was faithful to bring it to pass, it's our part to trust Him as He teaches us to trust Him and He develops our faith. We may not be able to connect the dots but we continue to trust the Lord. It's the Heb 11:6 principle, "*...without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*"

Vs23-25

That's an interesting Vs isn't it? God turning the heart of the Egyptians against the Israelites. Now don't think that they were turned *toward the Lord* previously, the Egyptians had all kinds of gods that they worshiped, the Lord was not one of them. What this amounts to is that God was stirring things up so that the Israelites would want to get out of the situation they were in.

God will make us uncomfortable sometimes if that's what it takes to get us moving, why leave Egypt if it's all good? It's no doubt God's mercy that so often finds us miserable before we turn to Christ from the world. If it's all good why look to God? Yet when we're miserable and oppressed we start looking for a way out, we're open to God intervening in our lives; at that point God sends a deliverer, namely Jesus Christ For the nation of Israel He sent a "type" of Christ, a foreshadowing of the Savior, Moses, notice.

Vs26-38

God had made a distinction between His people and the people of Egypt (of the world), the people of Egypt were done with the plagues, they didn't want any more devastation or destruction, they just wanted Israel gone. Not only did God make a distinction between those who were His own and those who were not, He ensured that there was a clean break from the world when they were called out, they were separated from Egypt and there was no going back. Listen, when you leave the world there's no going back. Jesus said, "*No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*" Luke 9:62 We're to move forward faithfully, we're not to look back, we're not to go back and we're not to "what if" move straight ahead, pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God that is in Christ Jesus.

Vs39-41

God's care and provision for His people; a cloud to shield them from the desert sun and light to see by at night, feeding them with the bread of heaven every morning and giving them water from the rock. Of course we know that Jesus is the true bread that's come down from heaven that satisfies man's deepest hunger and He's the rock from which the water flows satisfying our deepest thirst. Jesus said, "*If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.*" John 7:37 Torrents of living water, "water gushed out; it ran in the dry places like a river."

Vs42-45

The psalmist looks back on the nation's history and says, "Praise the Lord!" So to with you and so to with me, we should be able to look back at God's work in our lives and say, "Praise the Lord!" There in Vs 45 we're given insight as to why it is that God blesses us, why He's delivered us. It's so that we might walk *with* Him, be obedient *to* Him and give Him glory, that we might "praise the Lord!"

Psalm 106

As for psalm 106, it focuses on the history of Israel as well. But as to where the 105th psalm highlights God's faithfulness and says nothing negative of the nation of Israel, the 106th psalm highlights Israel's failures further accentuating the grace of God.

Vs1-2

How true is that? There aren't words sufficient, there isn't understanding sufficient to adequately express all the wonders of God and the things for which He's worthy of our praise. In Romans Ch 11 Paul put it like this, "*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!*" Romans 11:33

Vs3-5

If you read through the entire psalm and then come back and consider these Vs it seems to take on the flavor of, "I've got a lot to confess here God, please be merciful to me, remember me with favor, visit me with salvation." He cites 3 reasons, #1 That I might see (that is be a part of) the benefit of Your chosen ones, #2 That I might rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, and #3 That I may glory with Your inheritance.

Again what we see developing is the fact that God is faithful but man is faulty...But what is true today was equally true then and that is this; forgiveness begins with confession, an acknowledging *of* our sin and a turning *from* our sin and unto the Lord. The bible declares, "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" 1 John 1:9 Beginning in Vs 6 so starts the confession.

Vs6-7

Real quick (and we'll begin to pick up the pace), 2 things. Note the fact that this guy is confessing the sins of the nation, he personally is seeking the Lord, but he stands with a group of people who are guilty *before* the Lord, so he identifies himself *with* the people and confesses the sins *of* the people *to* the Lord. It seems as though there are times when God will honor and move on the behalf of a person or group of people for the sake of another. There are times in the gospel records when Jesus moved in a person's life due to the faith of someone else on their behalf. In Daniel Ch 9 Vs 20 you find Daniel confessing not only his sins, but the sins of his nation when the angel Gabriel is caused to come to him. I don't pretend to understand all of it, but I do find it an interesting observation and think it should stir us more diligently toward intercessory prayer.

The 2nd thing I want to point out here is how quick Israel was to forget God's work on their behalf. Did you see it there in Vs 7? God had delivered them from Egypt with a great and outstretched arm, miraculous plague upon plague, a demonstration of power and might. When did they forget all of that? At the Red Sea...The very 1st apparent obstacle and they were already doubting God's ability to deliver, they were accusing Moses of taking them from Egypt only to let them die in the wilderness at the waters of the Red Sea. How quickly we forget God's faithfulness, He may deliver us 100 times, but the 101st we're uncertain of.

Let's not be too quick to criticize the children of Israel until we 1st examine the tendency of our own heart... But God would glorify Himself through delivering them nonetheless, notice.

Vs8-12

How much better would it have been for them to praise Him in advance rather than in hindsight? May God increase our faith...

Vs13-15

Check it out, God's punishment came in the form of giving them what they asked for! We talk about God answering prayer when we ask according to His will, and that's right. We also understand that sometimes God *doesn't* answer our prayers because we don't ask in faith, or sometimes we have not simply because we ask not, or we might ask out of the wrong motive (James 4:2-3). But we should also understand that there are times when God *will* answer our prayers when we ask out of a wrong motive, that He *may* give us things that aren't good for us simply because we're like a spoiled child who refuses to quit asking, that we might learn to let Him decide what's best for our lives. God's discipline can come in the form of giving us what we ask for! "*He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.*" That word *leanness* speaks of a "wasting disease" what they wanted would only damage them, how much better to trust the Lord and be content with His desire for our lives.

Vs16-23

Again the picture of intercessory prayer, someone standing in the gap on behalf of the guilty that God might be gracious and merciful rather than destroy them in His wrath. But let's be careful that we don't "villainize" God here and make a hero out of Moses. How did Moses obtain such a passionate heart for intercessory prayer? How did he have a heart that wanted to see God move in mercy as opposed to His wrath? Because God gave him such a heart, God was using Moses, moving through him, man left to himself doesn't have that kind of heart, it was the work of God *in* Him that stood in the gap and interceded on behalf of the people. Again we see the need for intercessory prayer, God is looking for people who will stand in the gap that He might be merciful and gracious, longsuffering and patient.

Vs24-33

"It went ill with Moses on account of them." Which is to say that Moses didn't get to enter the Promised Land because of them! As for comparison and contrast Moses walked with God much more intimately than any of the children of Israel did, yet there would be those in *their #* (19yrs old and under) who would see the Promised Land. What's up with that? Here we're told, God was making an object lesson out of Moses concerning the importance of obedience to the Lord. The 1 time that Moses disobeyed and misrepresented the Lord in the presence of the people it cost him dearly. The signal was sent; be obedient to the word and the ways of God.

Vs34-39

Notice that behind idolatry is the worship of the demonic; Satanism. Concerning the sacrifice of children (otherwise known as abortion), it seems that to has its roots in the influence of the demonic, polluting the land with blood, defiled by our own works. That's not to say there isn't grace and forgiveness available, but we have to see where it stems from and not be blind to the enemy's tactics to steal, kill and destroy.

Vs40-48

How can we not take an honest evaluation of who we are, where we've been and what we've done, the wretched condition of the human heart and not exalt and magnify the grace of God? How can we not give thanks to His holy name and triumph in His praise? "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, 'Amen!' Praise the Lord!"

Prayer Points:

God you have said in Your word that if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged. Help us to examine ourselves in the light of Your righteousness that we might humble ourselves before You to the magnification and glorification of Your grace. We thank You for Your goodness toward us, Your forgiveness and Your faithfulness; words fall short of the praise that You deserve, but we lift our hearts to You in praise and we give You thanks.