

Parables of Plight, Prayer and Pity – Psalm 107

Book Five; Palm 107¹³

The last book in the Psalter, Book Five, is beyond description. By giving the reader 44 individual psalms, the LORD graces His people with writings designed to increase hope in and praise for Himself. Psalm 107 responds to the plea of the exiles in Ps.106: 47 (compare Ps.107:3) by giving readers parables of plight, prayer and pity.

The Joy of Reunion

v.1-3

The opening of this Psalm (v. 1-3) gives the reader the necessary introduction to understand the meaning of the following pictures found in the rest of the poem.

- **The Call** – Oh give thanks¹⁴ to the LORD
- **The Cause** – Unfailing covenant love
- **The Context** – the redeemed gathered in from the lands¹⁵

The Parables

Vv.4-32

The following verses contain four pictures of this glorious redemption.

The Wanderers Retrieved

v.4-9

- **The Context** - Desert wastes outside the city¹⁶ (*Gen.3:18,23; Heb.12:22ff; Rev.21-22*)
- **The Condition** – finding no way, hungry, thirsty, fainting (cf. John 4-7)
- **The Cry** – Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble
- **The Reply** – He delivered them from unfilled to fulfilled
- **The Response** – Let them publicly acknowledge Him

¹³ The outline and its headings were borrowed from Dr. Kidner's work on the Psalms.

¹⁴ According to a Hebrew scholar I studied under (Dr. Allen in Portland, OR) the Hebrew word "Yadah" is better translated as "to publicly acknowledge"; that is, "to tell of His Name".

¹⁵ A.F. Kirkpatrick, in his commentary on the Psalms (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges), noticed a parallelism with "lands" in Ps.105-07. His contention was that Ps.105 communicates the PROMISE (see 105:44), Ps.106 the PUNISHMENT (see 106:27) and finally Ps.107 the RESCUE (see 107:3).

¹⁶ Refer to our study on Psalm 87 in Lesson 22, pp. 71-73 of your notes.

The Prisoners Released

v.10-16

- **The Context** – A prison cell of suffering and seclusion¹⁷
- **The Condition** – Helpless/Hopeless due to rising up against His direction and falling down under His discipline
- **The Cry** – Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble
- **The Reply** – He delivered them out of fetters into freedom
- **The Response** – Let them publicly acknowledge Him

The Fool Restored

v.17-22

- **The Context** – Fools suffering due to their sin (i.e. addicts)
- **The Condition** – Self-created suffering, loathing food & approaching death
- **The Cry** – Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble
- **The Reply** – He delivered them from destruction to declaration
- **The Response** – Let them publicly acknowledge Him

The Storm-tossed Rescued

v.23-32

- **The Context** – A God-caused overwhelming circumstance
- **The Condition** – Weighed down in the course of making a living; a total loss of self-confidence
- **The Cry** – Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble
- **The Reply** – He delivered them from distress to a desired destination
- **The Response** – Let them publicly acknowledge Him

The Point

v.33-43

- The abovementioned redemption is about the Redeemer (v.33-42)
 - Who changes fruitful land into a salty waste (i.e. Sodom)
 - Who changes deserts into a garden/city (i.e. Isa.51:2f; Rev.21-22)
 - Who blesses and makes His people multiply greatly (Gen.1:28; 12:2; Ex.1:7; Col.1:6; Matt.28:19)
- These multi-faceted and magnificent pictures of the Redeemer are to be considered by the wise (v. 43) (for the value of “considering see Psalms 1 and 119. In addition see Eph.3:4; 2Tim.2:7; Heb.3:1)

¹⁷ Luke 1:76-79 use this passage to refer to Jesus.