

Psalm 107: The God Who Delivers

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One book calls this the “neatest” of all the psalms. The writer did not mean neat in the sense of “fabulous.” It is neat in the sense that it is orderly. Everything is well-arranged in this psalm. For example, Psalm 107 has a double refrain and chorus that is repeated four times in the psalm. In verses 6, 13, 19, and 28 it is said that “Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,” to which a response is made “and he delivered them from their distress” or some very similar wording. In verses 8, 15, 21, and 31, we read, “Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind.”

The setting for the writing of this psalm is probably after the Babylonian captivity and the return of the first remnants of the children of Israel (Psa. 107:1-3). The first few verses praise God who has delivered them from captivity. It then deals with other examples of God delivering those who are oppressed.

Introduction: “O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south” (Psa. 107:1-3).

Psalm 107 is a clear statement of faith in God’s working in this world in the lives of his people. Whether it was by miracles or by providence that God accomplished these great deeds, God’s hand was discerned in the events of this world, delivering, acting, redeeming, gathering, and saving.

God delivers: Four groups are mentioned whom God delivered (Clyde Miller, *Psalms*, Austin, TX: Sweet)

1. The homeless (Psalm 107:4-9).
2. Prisoners (Psalm 107:10-16).
3. The sick (Psalm 107:17-22).
4. Sailors in danger (Psalm 107:23-32).

The orderly nature of Psalm 107 continues in this section as (1) there is a

statement of the problem of each group, (2) each group cries out to the Lord, (3) they are delivered from their danger, (4) they are urged to give thanks to God, and (5) a fifth element follows which is slightly varied (Miller, *Psalms*, p. 361).

God rules over nature: Psalm 107:33-38 tells of God’s control of the natural world.

God reigns in history: Psalm 107:39-42 reminds us that God is on his throne.

Christ and Psalm 107: Psalm 107 is referring to God. Once we get to the New Testament age, though, we have a more developed understanding of God’s nature. We know God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God, as the Son, became flesh and dwelt among us and revealed to us his divine nature. In the Four Gospels we see Jesus acting in ways identical to how God did in the Old Testament. As Christians we can read Psalm 107 and find startling parallels between God and Christ.

“For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things” (Psa. 107:9). Christ did this and continues to do this. Christ is the water of life and the bread of life. He said that if we partake of him that we would never thirst again or be hungry again.

“He brought them out of darkness and gloom, and broke their bonds asunder” (Psalm 107:14). Jesus healed a woman with a spirit of infirmity that had crippled her for eighteen years (Luke 13:16). He freed people from the power of demons, Satan, and the enslavement of sin.

“He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction” (Psa. 107:20). Jesus went about teaching, preaching, and healing every disease and infirmity (Matt. 9:35). He proclaimed the word and people were saved from life-threatening illnesses. Even the dead were raised.

“He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed” (Psa.

107:29). Is this not what Jesus did on the Sea of Galilee? His disciples asked, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:41).

Conclusion: “Let those who are wise give heed to these things, and consider the steadfast love of the Lord” (Psa. 107:43).

I read of some school children who were asked to complete the following sentence: “By faith, I know that God is...” One boy wrote: “...caring, because he made a blind man see, and he made me catch a very fast line drive that could have hurt me. He probably sent an angel down.” Naïve? Yes. The young boy did not address many complex issues related to prayer. Confusion seems to have existed in his mind as to what he might have done versus what God might have done. Nevertheless, simple, trusting faith has its merits. If we do not have a good measure of it, we may become cynical and doubting.

Psalm 107 is an example of trusting faith in the working of God to deliver his people. It teaches that God is able to deliver. No trouble or difficulty is too big, powerful, complex, or complicated for God to overcome. Prayer is powerful if we believe, not because we are strong or our faith is something of which we should boast, but because God is almighty. We know that God worked dramatic miracles in biblical times, but he also worked in ordinary ways throughout the biblical era. Do not ignore the ordinary. God is working still. Today we do not have the gift of prophecy by which we can lift the veil of this physical world to see into the spiritual realm to know what the invisible hand of God is doing even now. Nevertheless, we should continue strong in our faith that God is still working and is able to answer prayer. As the psalmist says, “Let those who are wise give heed to these things, and consider the steadfast love of the Lord.”