

Give Thanks

Series: I Will Praise You In This Storm

Psalm 105

August 15, 2021

A man looked up from his hospital bed and said to his wife, “You’ve always been with me when I have had trouble. When I lost my shirt in a poor investment, you were there. When I had the car accident, you were with me. When I got fired, you were there. I realized that in all these misfortunes, you were there. Now I believe what my friends have been saying all along: you’re bad luck.”

Well, I’m not sure that guy understood the situation.

We are in our second week of our series “I Will Praise You In This Storm.” We are looking at psalms that help us when we find ourselves in trouble. Today, we are going to look at Psalm 105, so turn to page 6 in your bulletin.

Now, it is thought that this psalm was written, in part, by David, for the first 15 verses are also found in 1 Chronicles 16, where they are sung as part of the celebration of David’s bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.¹ The rest of it is thought to have been enlarged and sung at the restoration of the people from the Babylonian captivity.² The psalm recounts the history of Israel, so let’s look at it and discover its lessons.

First, Praise God for His Wonderous Works.

Verses 1-8:

*Give thanks to the LORD and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. Sing to him; yes, sing his praises. Tell everyone about his wonderful deeds. Exult in his holy name; rejoice, you who worship the LORD. Search for the LORD and for his strength; continually seek him. Remember the wonders he has performed, his miracles, and the rulings he has given, you children of his servant Abraham, you descendants of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the LORD our God. His justice is seen throughout the land. He always stands by his covenant— the commitment he made to a thousand generations.*³

This opening section invites the congregation to celebrate what the Lord has done, setting a tone of gladness with terms such as “give thanks”, “sing”, “sing praises”, “tell”, “exult”, and “rejoice.” The foundation of gratitude is remembering the wondrous works that the Lord has done, particularly those on behalf of his people, the offspring of Abraham.⁴

Lesson: You are an heir and beneficiary of what God has done.

When we know we are heirs and beneficiaries of what God has done, we can weather any storm that might come up. And this is not a name it and claim it thing. Faith is knowing beforehand Who God is and what God can do.

Remember what Jesus said to His disciples in the boat on a stormy Sea of Galilee: no fear, only faith. When we know we are heirs and beneficiaries of what God

¹ Life Application Study Bible, Psalm 105

² Adam Clarke’s Commentary, Psalm 105

³ Psalm 105:1-8 (NLT2)

⁴ See Genesis 15:5, 13, 18; 17:7

has done, it doesn't matter what the storm looks like. We have faith, so we will praise Him.

Second, God Chose Abraham and his descendants.

Verses 9-15:

This is the covenant he made with Abraham and the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, and to the people of Israel as a never-ending covenant: "I will give you the land of Canaan as your special possession." He said this when they were few in number, a tiny group of strangers in Canaan. They wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another. Yet he did not let anyone oppress them. He warned kings on their behalf: "Do not touch my chosen people, and do not hurt my prophets."⁵

The original of the term "Hebrew" comes from the word "sojourner" or "nomad." In fact, it was more like the term "gypsy" in a derogative way. Abraham and his people would wander from watering hole to watering hole, with no permanent place to call their home, so the residents called them nomads or Hebrews.

But God gave Abraham the promise. Genesis 13:14-17:

After Lot had gone, the LORD said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you."⁶

Lesson: God keeps His promises.

God keeps His promises. He did for Abraham, though he was small and a foreigner in the land. So, no matter the storm, we have the promise of the Lord.

Third, God Lifted Joseph Up.

Verses 16-22:

He called for a famine on the land of Canaan, cutting off its food supply. Then he sent someone to Egypt ahead of them— Joseph, who was sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the LORD tested Joseph's character. Then Pharaoh sent for him and set him free; the ruler of the nation opened his prison door. Joseph was put in charge of all the king's household; he became ruler over all the king's possessions. He could instruct the king's aides as he pleased and teach the king's advisers.⁷

Here the psalmist recounts the story of Joseph found in Genesis 39–41. Joseph went from being a slave in Potiphar's house, to prison, where he interpreted dreams. He then became next in command to Pharaoh. Following Joseph's words in Genesis 50:20, the psalm interprets the way Joseph was sold into slavery (the psalm does not need to add, "by his own brothers") and rose to power in Egypt as an expression of God's faithful care for His people.⁸

Did you notice something: Joseph went through many storms and trials. In fact, the psalmist suggests in verse 19 that God was testing his character.

Lesson: Your storm may be testing you for greater things.

⁵ Psalm 105:9-15 (NLT2)

⁶ Genesis 13:14-17 (NLT2)

⁷ Psalm 105:16-22 (NLT2)

⁸ ESV Study Bible, Psalm 105:16-23

Jesus was tested in the wilderness for 40 days before His ministry began. Your storm may be a time of testing for you. We don't like that possibility, for our image of God is a Santa Claus.

I've told you about my first solo flight.

That first solo was also a test, a life and death test. Could I fly an airplane without killing myself? And guess what? My sons were in the airport lobby watching me. Imagine if I had failed that test.

Your storm may be testing you for greater things down the line.

Fourth, God Sent Moses to Punish the Wicked.

Verses 23-36:

Then Israel arrived in Egypt; Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Ham. And the LORD multiplied the people of Israel until they became too mighty for their enemies. Then he turned the Egyptians against the Israelites, and they plotted against the LORD's servants. But the LORD sent his servant Moses, along with Aaron, whom he had chosen. They performed miraculous signs among the Egyptians, and wonders in the land of Ham. The LORD blanketed Egypt in darkness, for they had defied his commands to let his people go. He turned their water into blood, poisoning all the fish. Then frogs overran the land and even invaded the king's bedrooms. When the LORD spoke, flies descended on the Egyptians, and gnats swarmed across Egypt. He sent them hail instead of rain, and lightning flashed over the land. He ruined their grapevines and fig trees and shattered all the trees. He spoke, and hordes of locusts came— young locusts beyond number. They ate up everything green in the land, destroying all the crops in their fields. Then he killed the oldest son in each Egyptian home, the pride and joy of each family.⁹

This section of the psalm recounts events from the book of Exodus, focusing on how God used Moses to lead the people out of Egypt, in keeping with His promises from Genesis 15:13–16. Eight of the ten plagues on Egypt are described here. Because of the Egyptians' wickedness, they were punished harshly. It took God's power to free the Israelites after 400 years of captivity.

Lesson: God has the power to free us from the bondage of our grandparents, our parents, ourselves.

There is such a thing as generational judgment. Myra sees this so often in Children Services. A parent, who was in foster care as a child, is such a bad parent when they've grown that they lose their kids as well.

The Lord said to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 5:

You must not bow down to [false idols] or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands.¹⁰

I saw this in my own family. None of my grandparents finished high school. None. My Grandpa Wheeler went to the Oklahoma oil fields at the age of 13. My Grandpa Hudson's early job was a clinker: he went into furnaces and knocked the clink off the walls. It was a horrible job. But they taught their children right from wrong and the

⁹ Psalm 105:23-36 (NLT2)

¹⁰ Deuteronomy 5:9-10 (NLT2)

importance of family. But it was my parents who really turned the corner. They gave their lives to Christ, and their sons became a pastor and a neurosurgeon, or as I tell Greg, if he can't help them, I can. Our children are good kids, not in trouble, seeking to be productive members of society. That blessing from my parents' faithfulness to God continues.

If we turn to the Lord, we will be blessed.

Fifth, God Delivered Israel out of Egypt.

As I read verses 37-44, listen to all the things God did for Israel:

The LORD brought his people out of Egypt, loaded with silver and gold; and not one among the tribes of Israel even stumbled. Egypt was glad when they were gone, for they feared them greatly. The LORD spread a cloud above them as a covering and gave them a great fire to light the darkness. They asked for meat, and he sent them quail; he satisfied their hunger with manna—bread from heaven. He split open a rock, and water gushed out to form a river through the dry wasteland. For he remembered his sacred promise to his servant Abraham. So he brought his people out of Egypt with joy, his chosen ones with rejoicing. He gave his people the lands of pagan nations, and they harvested crops that others had planted.¹¹

This section rushes ahead from the events of Exodus to the time of Joshua, recalling that God remembered His holy promise to establish His people in the land.

Throughout the time in the wilderness – and several of us have seen the barrenness of the Wilderness of Sin – God provided for the thousands and thousands of Israelites, to the extent that even their shoes did not wear out.

Lesson: We need to be deeply grateful to our faithful God.

When it seems by all appearances the storm is too strong for us, be grateful for the providence of God. He gives plenty even in the wilderness, in the storm.

Finally, God Has a Purpose for the Storm.

Verse 45:

All this happened so they would follow his decrees and obey his instructions. Praise the LORD!¹²

Or in Hebrew, "Hallelujah!"

God's redemptive working in fulfillment of His covenant promise has as its goal the creating of a people in the earth who conform their lives to His holy will.

Lesson: Praise God for the Storm.

Sing Hallelujah when you face troubles.

Listen to what James says in his epistle:

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.¹³

We can't really know the depth of our character until we see how we react under pressure. It is easy to be kind to others when everything is going well, but can we still be kind when others are treating us unfairly? God wants to make us mature and complete, not to keep us from all pain. Instead of complaining about our struggles, we should see

¹¹ Psalm 105:37-44 (NLT2)

¹² Psalm 105:45 (NLT2)

¹³ James 1:2-4 (NLT2)

them as opportunities for growth. Thank God for promising to be with you in rough times. Ask Him to help you solve your problems or to give you the strength to endure them. Then be patient. God will not leave you alone with your problems; He will stay close and help you grow.¹⁴

*... And I'll praise You in this storm
And I will lift my hands
For You are who You are
No matter where I am
And every tear I've cried
You hold in Your hand
You never left my side
And though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm.*

¹⁴ Life Application Study Bible, James 1:2-4