

**Theme:**

**"God's Great Love For Us"**

**Psalms 103-104**

**Psalm 103**

(New International Version)

1 Praise the LORD, my soul;

all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

2 Praise the LORD, my soul,

and forget not all his benefits ◆

3 who forgives all your sins

and heals all your diseases,

4 who redeems your life from the pit

and crowns you with love and compassion,

5 who satisfies your desires with good things

so that your youth is renewed like the eagle ◆s.

6 The LORD works righteousness

and justice for all the oppressed.

7 He made known his ways to Moses,

his deeds to the people of Israel:

8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious,

slow to anger, abounding in love.

9 He will not always accuse,  
nor will he harbor his anger forever;  
10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve  
or repay us according to our iniquities.  
11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his love for those who fear him;  
12 as far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.  
13 As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;  
14 for he knows how we are formed,  
he remembers that we are dust.  
15 The life of mortals is like grass,  
they flourish like a flower of the field;  
16 the wind blows over it and it is gone,  
and its place remembers it no more.  
17 But from everlasting to everlasting  
the LORD's love is with those who fear him,  
and his righteousness with their children's children  
18 with those who keep his covenant  
and remember to obey his precepts.

19 The LORD has established his throne in heaven,

and his kingdom rules over all.

20 Praise the LORD, you his angels,

you mighty ones who do his bidding,

who obey his word.

21 Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts,

you his servants who do his will.

22 Praise the LORD, all his works

everywhere in his dominion.

Praise the LORD, my soul.

## **Study Notes**

### **The Story Behind the Psalm**

When Nebuchadnezzar took the Jews into captivity, he took the very rich and middle class or craftsmen. However, he left the very poor in the land of Canaan. God gave to each of these three groups a prophet. Daniel was the prophet for the very rich who went into captivity, Ezekiel went into captivity to be the prophet for the craftsmen or middle class, and Jeremiah stayed with the very poor. This Psalm was supposedly written either while the remnant of Jews was preparing to return to Palestine or as they returned.

The Way It Was Used by God's People This was a thanksgiving Psalm used at all thanksgiving seasons and even at thank offerings.

Theme: God's great love for us. What God does for us tells us what he is really like.

Author: David

PSALM 103:1

David's praise focused on God's glorious deeds. It is easy to complain about life, but David's list gives us plenty for which to praise God: He forgives our sins, heals our diseases, redeems us from death, crowns us with love and compassion, satisfies our desires, and gives righteousness and justice. We receive all of these without deserving any of them. No matter how difficult your life's journey, you can always count your blessings past, present, and future. When you feel as though you have nothing for which to praise God, read David's list.

PSALM 103:7

God's law was given first to Moses and the people of Israel. God's law presents a clear picture of God's nature and will. It was God's training manual to prepare his people to serve him and to follow his ways. Review the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and the history of how they were given, asking God to show you his will and his ways through them.

PSALM 103:12

East and west can never meet. This is a symbolic portrait of God's forgiveness: When he forgives our sin, he separates it from us and does not even remember it. We need never wallow in the past, for God forgives and forgets. We tend to dredge up the ugly past, but God has wiped our record clean. If we are to follow

God, we must model his forgiveness. When we forgive another, we must also forget the sin. Otherwise we have not truly forgiven.

PSALM 103:13, 14

We are fragile, but God's care is eternal. Too often we focus on God as judge and lawgiver, ignoring his compassion and concern for us. When God examines our lives, he remembers our human condition. Our weakness should never be used as a justification for sin. His mercy takes everything into account. God will deal with you compassionately. Trust him.

PSALM 103:20-22

Everything everywhere is to praise the Lord: all his angels and all his works! Praising God means remembering all he has done for us (103:2), fearing him and obeying his commands (103:17, 18), and doing his will (103:21). Does your life praise the Lord?

### **Psalm 104**

(New International Version)

1 Praise the LORD, my soul.

LORD my God, you are very great;

you are clothed with splendor and majesty.

2 The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment;

he stretches out the heavens like a tent

3 and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.

He makes the clouds his chariot  
and rides on the wings of the wind.

4 He makes winds his messengers,[a]  
flames of fire his servants.

5 He set the earth on its foundations;  
it can never be moved.

6 You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment;  
the waters stood above the mountains.

7 But at your rebuke the waters fled,  
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;

8 they flowed over the mountains,  
they went down into the valleys,  
to the place you assigned for them.

9 You set a boundary they cannot cross;  
never again will they cover the earth.

10 He makes springs pour water into the ravines;  
it flows between the mountains.

11 They give water to all the beasts of the field;  
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

12 The birds of the sky nest by the waters;  
they sing among the branches.

13 He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;

the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.

14 He makes grass grow for the cattle,  
and plants for people to cultivate

bringing forth food from the earth:

15 wine that gladdens human hearts,  
oil to make their faces shine,  
and bread that sustains their hearts.

16 The trees of the LORD are well watered,  
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

17 There the birds make their nests;  
the stork has its home in the junipers.

18 The high mountains belong to the wild goats;  
the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.

19 He made the moon to mark the seasons,  
and the sun knows when to go down.

20 You bring darkness, it becomes night,  
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

21 The lions roar for their prey  
and seek their food from God.

22 The sun rises, and they steal away;  
they return and lie down in their dens.

23 Then people go out to their work,  
to their labor until evening.

24 How many are your works, LORD!  
In wisdom you made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.

25 There is the sea, vast and spacious,  
teeming with creatures beyond number ♦  
living things both large and small.

26 There the ships go to and fro,  
and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.

27 All creatures look to you  
to give them their food at the proper time.

28 When you give it to them,  
they gather it up;  
when you open your hand,  
they are satisfied with good things.

29 When you hide your face,  
they are terrified;  
when you take away their breath,  
they die and return to the dust.

30 When you send your Spirit,



they are created,  
and you renew the face of the ground.  
31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever;  
may the LORD rejoice in his works ❖  
32 he who looks at the earth, and it trembles,  
who touches the mountains, and they smoke.  
33 I will sing to the LORD all my life;  
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.  
34 May my meditation be pleasing to him,  
as I rejoice in the LORD.  
35 But may sinners vanish from the earth  
and the wicked be no more.  
Praise the LORD, my soul.  
Praise the LORD.

## **Study Notes**

### **The Story Behind the Psalms**

These form a new group of Psalms called the "Hallelujah Psalms." Hallelujah means "Praise ye Jah," or "Praise ye Jehovah." An interesting thing about the word "hallelujah" is that it is the same in every language. It is the one word in all languages that becomes the common denominator. We cannot all speak the same language about most subjects, but when it comes to praising the Lord, we all speak the same language.

These Psalms are divided into three groups ♦ group one ends with hallelujah. In this group are Psalms 104 and 105. Group two begins with hallelujah. This includes Psalms 111 and 112. Group three both begins and ends with hallelujah. Included are Psalms 106, 113, 135, and 146 through 150.

It is interesting that with the passing of the years David's praise becomes greater. The term, "Praise ye the Lord," is included more and more in the Psalms written near the end of David's life. He once said, "I will praise Him more and more," and so he did. As these Psalms are read, the reader should picture an aged David lifting his hands and voice Heavenward thanking God for His grace, for His mercy, for His lovingkindness and for His faithfulness.

#### The Way They Were Used by God's People

The Jews would use these as doxology Psalms when they wanted to praise the Lord. They were used at any time. They were much like our songs, "Praise Him, Praise Him, Jesus Our Blessed Redeemer," "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," etc. In other words, they were general songs of praise used at any occasion the heart leaped with joy.

Theme: Appreciating God through his creation. He not only creates, but maintains his creation. The Lord ♦s care is the source of our joy.

Author: Believed To Be David

#### PSALM 104:1

This psalm is a poetic summary of God ♦s creation of the world as found in the first chapter of Genesis. What God created each day is mentioned by the psalmist as a reason to praise God. On day one, God created light (104:1, 2; Genesis 1:3); day two, the heavens and the waters (104:2, 3; Genesis 1:6); day three, land and vegetation (104:6-18; Genesis 1:9-13); day four, the sun, moon, and stars (104:19-23; Genesis 1:14-16); day five, fish and birds (104:25, 26; Genesis 1:20-23); and on

day six, animals, people, and food to sustain them (104:21-24, 27-30; Genesis 1:24-31). God's act of creation deserves the praise of all people.

#### PSALM 104:5

The earth is built on God's foundations, and he guarantees its permanence. It would never be moved by anyone other than God. Even though one day the heavens and the earth will be destroyed (2 Peter 3:10), he will create a new heaven and a new earth that will last forever (Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1). The same power that undergirds the world also provides a firm foundation for believers.

#### PSALM 104:24

Creation is filled with stunning variety, revealing the rich creativity, goodness, and wisdom of our loving God. As you observe your natural surroundings, thank God for his creativity. Take a fresh look at people, seeing each one as God's unique creation, with his or her own special talents, abilities, and gifts.

#### PSALM 104:28-30

Psalms 105 expresses God's sovereignty in history; this psalm tells of his sovereignty over all creation. God has supreme, unlimited power over the entire universe. He creates; he preserves; he governs. As we understand God's power, we realize that he is sufficient to handle our life.

#### PSALM 104:29

Today many people are arrogant enough to think they don't need God. But our every breath depends on the life he has breathed into us (Genesis 2:7; 3:19; Job 33:4; 34:14, 15; Daniel 5:23). Not only do we depend on God for our very life, but he wants the best for us. We should also desire to learn more of his plans for us each day.