

Psalm 105

"A Redemptive Psalm for a Redemptive People"

CIT: God is worthy of Israel's worship because He keeps His promises through His wondrous works, miracles, and judgements

Main Point: Worship the LORD because He follows through with His promises.

Introduction:

It's mid-March which means that the climax of college basketball is here. Earlier this week 64 teams lined up to compete for a championship. Each team has their own story of how they got to this stage and as the games are played and they move from one round to another more stories will form. If you know anything about March Madness then you will know that it is a great time for story telling. Even now some of you may remember the story of a young freshmen named Michael Jordan hitting the game winner to win a national championship for North Carolina. Others of you may remember that March Madness was the start of great rivalry's between players like Magic Johnson and Larry Byrd. In recent years you may have heard the story of Sister Jean Schmidt who is 102 years old and travels to watch, cheer, and pray for her favorite team, the Loyola Chicago Wolves. Even if you just started watching March madness this year you'll know that the story this year is about a 15th seed who beat Kentucky named St. Peters. But what makes March Madness so thrilling? Why are so many people captivated by this tournament? The answer is simple: it is filled with several good stories and everyone likes a good story. It has stories like David and Goliath; the little nobody school takes down the historically dominant program. We love a good and compelling story. They permeate in our minds and workout our emotions. In life, we all have a story to tell. Often times when we tell stories it is from a perspective or memory from the past. These stories can be filled with thanksgiving or sorrow. It can have action or comedy. Some of our stories are romantic and others are thrillers. We all have stories and they all vary from person to person. But often times the stories we tell are stories that define who we are today. As we look at Psalm 105 we see that David has a story that he reflects on as well. This story for David is compelling and it calls him to action. It's a story that we can all relate to and it is one we can learn from. It is the story of Israel's redemption.

David uses this story to call Israel to worship the LORD with their lives. That same call is here for us today, David is calling Israel to worship the LORD because of his faithfulness to keep his covenants. That same call is for us today in that we all have a story of redemption based on God's covenant. We recall the story of Christ: His death, burial, and resurrection; and we, like David, find that the story of our salvation should lead us to worship the LORD with our lives.

The Psalmist Imperative (v.1-7)

Before getting into the redemptive story of Israel the Psalmist gives eleven imperatives. He says:

- (1) Give thanks to the LORD (v.1)
- (2) Call upon his name (v.1)
- (3) Make known his deeds among the peoples (v.1)
- (4) Sing to Him (v.2)
- (5) Tell of all his wondrous works (v.2)
- (6) Glory in His Holy name (v.3)
- (7) Seek the LORD and His strength (v.4)
- (8) Seek His presence continually (v.4)
- (9) Remember the wondrous works, the miracles, and judgements (v.5)

All these commands can be wrapped up together under one word: Worship! Simply put the Psalmist is commanding the Israelites to worship the LORD. Now when we consider worship we often times we think of the singing portion of Sunday morning/night service. However, we know from scripture that worship is not a scheduled event that we do 2-3 times a week. Rather, we should think of worship as a way of life. In Romans 12 Paul says that presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice is to participate in spiritual worship. He goes on to give an imperative that leads us to being daily worshipers of Jesus. He says, "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..." And really what Paul is getting at is the same thing that the psalmist is saying. The mind that is conformed to this world does not consider God in their thanksgiving, praise, and work; but the mind that is being spiritually renewed desires to follow the command of the Psalmist.

The person whose mind is renewed:

- (1) Has reason to be thankful
- (2) Has reason to call on God
- (3) Has reason to tell others about Him
- (4) Has reason praise and glorify His name
- (5) Has reason to seek His strength and presence continually
- (6) Has reason to remember His faithfulness.

Why? Because the mind that is being renewed does not worship from a position of strength but humility. For the person who obeys the commands of the Psalmist he realizes that the rest of his/her life is lived (not for 2-3 hours a week for the LORD) but their whole life is poured out in dedication of knowing the LORD, being known by the LORD, and making the LORD known. And I believe v.5 in this Psalm is an indication that this imperative is not an empty and meaningless call to worship, rather this is an imperative based off of His testimony of knowing the LORD, being known by the LORD, and desiring to make the LORD known.

The Psalmist Outline (v.5)

Verse 5 lays out the outline for Psalm 105. In this song David reflects on the history of Israel and remembers the wondrous works, the great miracles, and the fair judgements of the LORD. He is using this history lesson on God as evidence to show the reader that God is worthy of worship because God is faithful to keep His promises, provide protection, and have provision for His people. What we will learn from this passage is that We should worship the Lord because of His wondrous works, His great miracles, and His judgments.

1. Worship the LORD because of His wondrous works (v.8-25)

In verses 8-25 the Psalmist points out the wondrous works of the LORD by pointing out God's covenant, God's protection, and God's provision for his people.

G. The Lord and His Covenants (v.8-11)

In verses 8-11 David starts his account of Israel's history with God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Israel. In Genesis 12:1-3 God comes to Abraham and says,

“Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

There are two other promises that God made with Abraham in Genesis 15 & 17. You can remember the three promises from God like this: God promised land, offspring, and universal blessing¹

Then the Lord appeared to Issac, the son of Abraham in Genesis 26:24 and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake.”

Later in Genesis 35:10 he comes to Jacob, the Son of Isaac, and says, “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.” So he called his name Israel. And God said to him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.”

We know from the story of Jacob (Israel) that His sons eventually became the patriarchs of each tribe of Israel. But once we get to verse 10 in Psalm 105 we see that the covenant is on going because it is an “everlasting covenant” meaning that it goes on forever. That everlasting covenant for Israel is rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant found in Genesis 17:7-8 when God says,

¹ <https://bibleproject.com/blog/covenants-the-backbone-bible/>

“I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you through their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

H. The Lord and His protection (v.12-15)

God keeps his covenants with His people and he kept his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In verses 12-15 David points out that God keeps his covenant by protecting those he enters into a covenant with. These verses are talking about the time before Israel's existence and during the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's sojourning. Verse 14 says that God allowed no one to oppress these men. In Genesis 35:5, just before God renames Jacob the text tells us that as he and his family traveled and God would go before them to the cities and it says, “a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.”

Verse 14 also points out that God rebuked Kings on their account. You may recall in Genesis 20 when Abraham and his wife Sarah entered into the land of Gerar and Abraham told Sarah to tell the people that she was his sister and not his wife. Abraham did this in order to save his own life. As a result of his selfishness King Abimelech took Sarah to be with him. But God was a keeper of His covenant. His promise for Abraham to have a child was not only for him but for Sarah as well. Therefore, in order for God to follow through on the covenant Sarah must continue as Abraham's wife. So he protects Abraham and Sarah by coming to Abimelech in a dream and he says, “Behold you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife.” It is highly probable that verse 15 is a reference to that story because we first see a threat from God to Abimelech and later in Genesis 20:7 he refers to Abraham as a prophet.

But don't miss the point God's covenant assures God's protection for God's people.

I. The Lord and His provision (v.16-25)

The third portion of this first section is a historical reflection of God's provision. When God enters into a covenant relationship with His people his promise also assures that he will provide for them. Verses 16-25 recalls an act of God's provision through Jacob's son Joseph. In verses 16-22 we see Joseph's experience in Egypt while verse 23 shows us Jacob's trip to Egypt, and verses 24-25 give an overall summary of Israel's experience in Egypt. In God's act of provision for Israel he provides them with food, a home, and prosperity. He provided the food through Joseph, the home through Jacob, and the prosperity through his grace.

This story is told in Genesis 37-50 and you will remember that Joseph was adored by his father Jacob and it made his brothers jealous so they decided to get rid of him for good. Joseph ended up being sold by his brothers and sent to Egypt as a slave but we know from David's historical recollection in v.17 that it was actually God who sent Joseph ahead of Israel. He became 2nd in command behind Pharaoh and was in charge of delegating the food they had collected before the famine struck the land. This historically lines up with Joseph's personal account because it was he who told his brothers, "What you meant for evil God meant for good." And the good God did for Israel was sending a young man to Egypt in order to feed His people during the time of a great famine.

Later Joseph uses his authority to bring Jacob and his family into the land of Egypt to live without worry of the famine. God not only provided them food but also a new home where God would care for their needs. Over time v.24 tells us that the nation of Israel grew strong and fruitful under the LORD's provision but as the story goes the Pharaoh would not have it. So he enslaved them and oppressed them.

You will notice in v.25 that David says God turned their hearts to hate His people and we see that play out in Exodus 1:8-14

8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9 And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. 10 Come, let us deal

shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.”

In this historical portion of the text it seems as if God has forgotten Israel and left them to be abused and used by Egypt but don't forget what the Psalmist has already said in v.14 “he allowed no one to oppress them.” Let it be known that Egypt may have had its way with God's people for now but God will not sit back long because he has a covenant to fulfill and He never breaks His covenants. In the remainder of this chapter David unfolds the second portion of Israel's history and that is their deliverance and redemption.

Application:

(1) We have reason to be thankful

This front portion of the text gives Israel ample reasons to give thanks to the LORD. The first reason is that God decided that these people would be the people he enters into a covenant with. He did not choose Egypt or another people group. He chose to enter into a relationship with Israel and he stood by his promise by protecting them and providing for them. If you are in Christ then you have entered into a similar promise. You have been saved not by the merit of your works but by the working grace of Christ. You have reason to be thankful because those who are in Christ receive blessings on earth and in heaven.

You can express thanksgiving by getting on your knees, or grab a journal and begin to say and/or write all the gifts you have received since knowing Christ and give thanks for them. Simply tell the LORD thank you for all the blessing you have because of Him.

Then turn and express your thanksgiving through actions. There is no better way to pay back than to pay it forward—in other words— if you have entered into this relationship with Christ then you have entered into an overwhelming gift of grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness. We can give thanks to the LORD by mimicking the love of God by showing grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness toward those around us.

2. Worship the LORD because of his great miracles (v.26-42)

A. The Lord and His provision (v.26-27; 37-42)

What we have seen so far in God's provision is that he provided Israel with food, a home, and prosperity. Now he provides Israel with deliverance. In verses 26-27 and 37-42 of this chapter we see God providing deliverance to His people through the great miracles performed through Moses.

The story of Moses delivering Israel out of Egypt begins in Exodus 5 and extends into chapter 12. God sent Moses to get his people from Pharaoh and if Pharaoh decided not to listen then God would miraculously bring 10 plagues over Egypt, with the last one being the passover. That's when all the first born of Egypt, including Pharaohs would die. This Psalm doesn't actually list all the plagues that come over the Egyptians but the ones that are listed are:

- (1) Darkness over the land
- (2) Turned the Nile River into blood.
- (3) Swarmed the land with frogs
- (4) Sent swarms of flies and gnats throughout the country
- (5) Sent hail and lightning on the land
- (6) He spoke and locust came in uncountable numbers
- (7) And He killed all the firstborn in their land

These acts cannot be done by a mere man but only by God. And what we learn from the story is that God used these miracles to break down the strength and confidence of Egypt and deliver His people from their oppression where God would show His provision through even greater miracles.

In verses 37-42 God brings his second phase of miracles. First notice that God provided prosperity and wealth to his people by providing them with Egypt's silver and gold. Exodus 12:35-36a says, "The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the

Egyptians for silver and gold and for clothing. And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians...”

But now that they were delivered God uses certain miracles to guide them in their journey to the promise land. Verses 39-40 tells us that God provided

- (1) Shade during the day to keep them cool
- (2) A ball of fire in the sky to give them light at night
- (3) They asked and he gave them quail
- (4) They prayed and bread fell from heaven
- (5) He opened the rock for them to drink water

Verse 42 tells us that God performed these miracles in Egypt and in the desert because “He remembered His holy promise with Abraham.” Like I said, God will not let his people suffer forever he will come for them and he will judge those who oppress them in order to protect them and fulfill the promises he has made.

Application:

We have reason to call on God

The Israelites found themselves in a season of great oppression and God rescued them.

He did not forget his people. A few years ago an international student at DSU was saved and baptized here in Cleveland. Her family was a part of the Isis community and when she arrived home from the states they discovered that she was no longer Muslim but had been saved by God’s grace. Shortly after her time at home a distant family member devised a plan to have her killed for her new faith. However, this young lady called out to the LORD for protection and God used churches and believers in this area and throughout the state of MS to bring her back to the states where she now lives as a new citizen of America free from the persecution of her family. Now, many of us are not running from people who are trying to kill us for our faith but all of us have reason to call upon the LORD in our hour of need. Some of us may not need personal deliverance from persecution but maybe you need to be delivered from your sin that has enslaved you much like the Israelites were.

The only thing that can conquer your sin and save you from oppression and persecution is the grace and mercy of God so church, call upon the name of the LORD. Lean into him in prayer

and trust in his promises. Commit Psalm 23 to your heart and believe that the God we call on is a God who is a good shepherd always leading and guiding his flock into greener pastures. Believe this and you will be delivered as well.

3. Worship the LORD because of His judgements (v.28-38)

A. The Lord and His protection (v.28-36)

God's judgement is a fearful thing to think about but it is especially fearful for those who oppose Him. For those of us who are in Christ and for the Israelites in this account there was no fear of judgement from the LORD because in this case God's judgement served as a means of protecting and delivering His people from the evil hands of Pharaoh

The great miracles God performed to deliver Israel is the same thing he used to judge Egypt. Each of the plagues that David listed in the Psalm ended in the Egyptians fear or death.

- (1) The darkness struck fear into their lives
- (2) The River turned blood killed the fish
- (3) The swarm of frogs covered all parts of the land, including the kings chambers
- (4) The flies and gnats were every where
- (5) The hail and lightning killed the vines and fig trees
- (6) The locus killed the vegetation
- (7) And he killed the firstborn of all the families of Egypt

Romans 12:19 says, Never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

As David is reflecting on God's work in the history of Israel he is sure to point out that vengeance indeed belongs to the LORD. Egypt sought to make Israel weak and God weakened Egypt instead. Egypt decided to oppress God's people and God oppressed them with plagues. Egypt decided to abuse and enslave the people of God and God killed the firstborn child in every family. Let it be made clear in our hearts and minds God will not allow His people to suffer and

be oppressed forever. He will protect His people by judging their foes. What better reason to worship the LORD? He stands up to the bully and He fights our battles.

As for Egypt they had had enough. Verse 38 says, “Egypt was glad when they departed for dread of them had fallen upon it” Now we know from the story that Pharaoh hardened his heart a second time towards Israel and chased after them in their departure; but what a grace of God to grant them relief. Many enemies who proudly oppose the LORD do not get such a gift from his judgement. But as for us praise the LORD give thanks to his name for His promises, provisions, and protection then, now, and forevermore.

Application:

We have reason to tell others about Him

Church, a judgement far worse than Egypt is awaiting those we consider our enemies— a judgement far more severe and permanent. Our hearts should not desire that anyone perish and see the wrath of God but that all come to know Christ as LORD and Savior. We have a reason to share the good news of Jesus Christ because of God’s judgement and the mercy we have received despite our sins.

What God has done in us He intends to do to others through us. Robby Gallaty once said, “Your salvation came to you because it was going to somebody else.” That means that God saved us all for the purpose of being obedient to the great commission and making disciples. Over the past several months we have committed as a church to take the gospel to one person who is close to us and far from God. Church, if what we have heard tonight is true then our greatest desire should be for others to experience the promises of God fulfilled for them in Christ who has taken the wrath of the judgment of God on our behalf.

4. Worship the LORD because He is always faithful. (v.43-45)

Verses 43-45 conclude the historical overview with a sense of peace. You almost get this sense of “it is finished. We won. We have been delivered. ”God fulfilled his promise and delivered his people into the land of Canaan. Their deliverance from Egypt into the wilderness, according to David, was a departure filled with joy and singing. God continued to bless them and David said it was for the purpose of keeping God’s statutes and laws. He then makes a call to the people based on the work of God in their history to Praise the LORD!

But here is the thing a covenant works both ways. What David did in this Psalm is reflect on the faithful work of the LORD on behalf of Israel. In case you were wondering a covenant is,

“A chosen relationship or partnership in which two parties make binding promises to each other and work together to reach a common goal... but [a covenant] differ from a contract in that they are relational and personal.²

When David referenced the Abrahamic covenant he chose to only look at God upholding the covenant with Israel.

However, we know that Abraham failed. He did not trust that God would provide an offspring through Sarah so he had a child with her servant Hagar. (Genesis 12:10-20; 16:4; 20)

Fast forward to Isaac and we find him following in his fathers footsteps by lying to another king to protect himself from what he thought was sudden death. (Genesis 26)

Then we get to Jacob took two wives and shows partiality with them, lies to his father, and steals his brother birthright. (Genesis 25:29-34; 27; 29:31)

Next we have Moses decided not to trust the LORD keeping him from entering into the promise land (Numbers 20:12)

But let's look at the people he led. David said they were delivered with joy and singing but we see them later in the wilderness bitter and grumpy. (Numbers 14:4) Shortly after their deliverance they are found bowing down to a golden calf. (Exodus 32) So far all who have entered into a covenant relationship with God have failed to keep their end of the promise. They came short of the standards and glory of God.

Ibid, Bible Project Link

However, we get to the NT and Matthew 1 is a genealogy of the covenantal people of God. It starts with Abraham (Matthew 1:2) goes through David (Matthew 2:6) and ends with Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:16).

Jesus is the offspring of Abraham, who like Isaac trusted his father, even to the point of death. But unlike Abraham to Isaac, God sacrificed His Son so that all who enter into the covenant of God would be saved.

Jesus is the perfect Israelite. At age two he was sent into Egypt and like Israel he was called out of that land. He wandered in the wilderness and was offered bread to fill his stomach but his satisfaction was found in the Father. As for the law he did not break it. He did not bow down to idols, He did not grumble and complain, He did not turn away from the will of God, no! He perfectly obeyed the law in every manner and did what no Israelite had done before—he kept their end of the covenant.

Hebrews 9:15 says, “Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.”

In other words, the only way for there to be justice in the eyes of God is if all those who have broken His covenant to be put to death. Church, we have broken it. But God in His kindness has given us Jesus; who in His perfection gave up His life by taking on our sins and giving His righteousness to anyone who would repent and trust in Him.

Psalms 105 and Hebrews 9:15 reminds me of a song written called “The Gospel” by a guy named Bizzle. He wrote the song for his kids and in the song he tells about all the old testament promises God made and in the last verse he speaks from the perspective of Christ and this is what he says,

"I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end
I am the Lamb without blemish sacrificed for your sin
The Lamb of God, without sin, little children understand
You can't do it on your own, it is Me who covers man
I'm the one who took your place when death lifted up his hand
Gave you righteousness for faith
You're the one who broke the law, but it was I He sent to pay
Gave my life for those who hate me
I went quietly, and I didn't even try to beat the case
I'm the offer He accepts when your works get rejected
I'm the one who pleads your case before the judge in Heaven
Knew that you were guilty, but loved you enough to serve your sentence
The wages for sin is death, I died to expunge your record
See, I am the Passover, the wrath of God is waiting
Every life not covered by the blood will be taken
I'm the way, the truth, the life, and I'll always be
I Am, I Am, beloved, it was always Me"³

Application:

Church if it is Christ who fulfills this work for us then we have ample reason to follow the last imperative of the chapter and "Praise the LORD." Praising the LORD happens in this building, but if Christ truly fulfills the covenant for us when we could not and he has saved our lives then our praise should extend outside the walls of this place.

1. We have reason praise and glorify His name

There is no greater reason to praise and glorify the name of the LORD than to praise him for what he has done for us in Christ. We praise his name in church through song and preaching. We praise his name in our conversations at work, at home, at school. We praise his name in our thoughts and actions. Why? Because we identify with His name. When we come together we are "in Christ." When we gather as a body we are "the body of Christ." All that we are and all that we do we do it in Christ. So we live our lives to the glory and praise of his name.

2. We have reason to seek His strength and presence continually

Only God has the power and strength to keep His covenants. Only God does not fall into temptation because He cannot be tempted. Only God can create a scenario where both justice and mercy reign. God is the source of our strength and apart from Him we are weak. Therefore, we

³ <https://genius.com/Bizzle-the-gospel-lyrics>

seek his strength by committing ourselves to knowing the scriptures, meditating on the scriptures, and memorizing the scriptures. We ought to be a people who love to hear and read the word of God. We also must attach ourselves to him in prayer and continually lean on his knowledge and wisdom and insight.

3. We have reason to remember His faithfulness.

Lastly, we must remember his faithfulness. Look back on your life and look at the works of the LORD. See how he has been faithful. Journal it down and keep the dates so that your children, and your grandchildren can see how God was faithful to you. Write out your prayers and look back on them often to see how God has listened and answered. When we remember His faithfulness it will ignite our thanksgiving, our desire to call on God, our courage to tell others about God, our reason to praise and glorify God, and motivation to continually seek His presence.

So church, praise the LORD.