

## REVERENT THANKSGIVING TO OUR SAVIOR AND LORD (Psa 107) CBC-6, 20 Jun 2021

Plain enough for a child; yet sublime and profound, a seed of all true religion. We can only survey briefly, even in two pulpit sessions.

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*See God's wonderful works as Savior and Lord and give Him reverent thanks*  
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Prelude: Call to Thanksgiving (1-3). To stir us for highest calling—worship.

- His goodness in Himself. “The loveliness, benign character, sweetness, friendliness, kindness, and generosity of God . . . the very essence of God’s Being, even if there were no creature to whom this could be manifested” (à Brakel, TCRS 1.122).
- His goodness to us. Mercy, steadfast love. Unfailing, enduring, absolutely trustworthy, covenantal love to His people.
- His goodness on display. We were scattered (imp.) in “the hand of the enemy.” By His doing, we are now “redeemed,” brought into safety, by being “gathered” unto the LORD Himself. Thus, a song!

Trans: Goodness announced, now goodness illustrated (as Savior, Lord).

I. His Wonderful Works as Merciful Savior (4-32), 4 examples, one pattern (♦ misery ♦ prayer ♦ deliverance ♦ thanksgiving), one refrain (8, 15, 21, 31) tailored for each example (9, 16, 22, 32). Prob. no specific historical reference but general cases occurring countless times.

A. Savior from homelessness (4-9), the first example of His mercy

- 4-7: ♦ Wandering (move about aimlessly or without any destination; lost!) in the wilderness/desert, alone, hunger/thirst, faint or weak (lit. first, but also fig.). ♦ “Cried” [out] in desperation and in trouble/distress. ♦ The Lord *delivered from* (neg.) and *led to* (pos.) “a city to live in,” “a settled place.” A powerful image of permanence at home: connotation of rest, fellowship, abundance, happiness.
- 8, 9: ♦ Thanksgiving with satisfaction. Earnest desire: “O that men would.” Holy activity: “praise the Lord for His goodness.” Rational basis: “his wonderful works for” us. Tailored here to highlight the personal satisfaction/filling He is and gives. Augustine: “Thou hast prompted man, that he should delight to praise thee, for thou hast made us for thyself and restless is our heart until it comes to rest in thee” (Confessions 1.1). The greatest pleasure is in *giving God thanks* for the blessings.

B. Savior from imprisonment (10-16), second example of mercy

- 10-14: ♦ Confinement in 5 miserable words, consequence of sinning (n.b. against God’s words/counsel), bringing much suffering. N.b., our sins do not disqualify us from God’s saving work but let it shine brighter (Rom 5.20)! ♦ “Then they cried.” ♦ “He saved them out of their distresses,” liberation.
- 15, 16: ♦ Thanksgiving in freedom. Refrain, tailored here in the dramatic language of a prison break effected by God.

C. Savior from sickness (17-22), third example of mercy

- 17-20: ♦ Illness (loss of appetite, dying) which is *disciplinary* (emphasized here; not all illness is such). ♦ “Then they cried” (3rd of 4x) ♦ “He saveth them” (healing, averting death).

- 21, 22: ♦ Thanksgiving with joyful praise. Thanksgiving as fig. “sacrifice” (lit., slaying animal in religious ritual), amounts to “declaring His works,” celebrating, crediting Him for them.

C. Savior from peril (23-32), fourth example of mercy

- 23-30: ♦ Danger on the high seas, esp. feared in the ancient world, sometimes symbolic for greatest, most dangerous forces in nature, and also evil powers. Yet necessary to “do business.” Elements obedient to the Lord, induce man’s proper sense of “littleness” and vulnerability. ♦ “Then they cry” (4/4x). ♦ “He bringeth them out” (neg.) and “bringeth them to” (pos.), distress to safe harbor.
- 31, 32: ♦ Thanksgiving in the holy congregation. Tailored to emphasize the corporate nature of climactic praise. Public worship is to be preferred over private for many reasons.

How can we most glorify God on the earth? How can we experience most of His presence? How can we see Him most clearly revealed? How can we get the maximum possible spiritual benefits from the Lord? How can we do the most good to our fellow believers? What is the best antidote to backsliding and apostasy? Where can we experience the Lord doing His greatest works on earth? What is the closest experience to heaven we can get in this world? . . . The answer . . . is the public worship services of your church (Warren Peel lauding David Clarkson’s classic sermon on this).

→ See God’s wonderful works as Savior and thank Him for deliverances.

II. His Wonderful Works as Sovereign Lord (33-42), two realms: the natural and the social—both far beyond human control, but not God’s. Illustrated in dramatic reversals through divine Providence.

- A. 33-38: Lord of the earth, famine and fruitfulness. Water essential for life. *Acc. to His good pleasure*, God causes drought, poor crops (sometimes as judgments), plentiful water, habitable conditions, bountiful harvests, sustainable crops and herds (gifts of grace).
- B. 39-42: Lord of society, rich and powerful, poor and weak. Same sovereign disposition of human beings. He brings about oppression, affliction, sorrow, humiliation even of the highest (Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon to a maniac eating grass), as well as raising up the poor and hated to places of prosperity and respect (e.g., Joseph, prison to Prince of Egypt). Observing this Providence, the righteous praise God and the wicked are rendered speechless.

Postlude: Call to Reverence (43). After emphatic calls to thanksgiving . . .

- The fellowship of wisdom. The division of wise/foolish people. Attending to these things our duty and a mark of spiritual wisdom. “Them” is plural; “they” have fellowship in meditation/discussion of the LORD’s “lovingkindness” (steadfast love, covenantal mercy).
- The Wisdom that saves us. Incarnate in Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1.24). We were wandering in the wilderness of sin, chained/confined to our sins, suffering sin as a sickness of the soul, endangered by sin’s perils. But we cried to the Lord Jesus in our trouble and He brought us into the family/home of His church, set us free to serve Him in righteousness, healed us by His stripes, and now preserves us for His everlasting kingdom. “Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* His goodness, and *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!” Ω