

# Psalm 107 • God to the Rescue!

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Psalm 107 presents a different approach to the Psalms, frankly because it is a praise, but it comes about by picturing God's deliverance. What it does for us here is it gives us 4 little short stories. And I happen to believe that these stories are probably not to be taken literally from the standpoint that we think of them in just purely literal terms. I think that they probably have more symbolic, poetic, even metaphoric, sort of applications. I think you'll see once we get into them.

This song begins in the first 3 verses with the preview or the preamble. It says:

*“Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever!  
<sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,  
whom he has redeemed from trouble  
<sup>3</sup> and gathered in from the lands,  
from the east and from the west,  
from the north and from the south.” (ESV)*

All right, now we're going to begin the first story. And I want you to— as we're reading these stories, I want you to think about this maybe in symbolic terms and see if any of these stories applied to your life before you met Jesus. Okay? See if any of them apply. Here we go.

*“<sup>4</sup> Some wandered in desert wastes,  
finding no way to a city to dwell in;  
<sup>5</sup> hungry and thirsty,  
their soul fainted within them.  
<sup>6</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.  
<sup>7</sup> He led them by a straight way  
till they reached a city to dwell in.  
<sup>8</sup> Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wondrous works to the children of man!  
<sup>9</sup> For he satisfies the longing soul,  
and the hungry soul he fills with good things.”*

Okay. Interesting, huh? Is that you? Hey, did you find yourself before Christ wandering in desert wastes? Did you find yourself—in other words, did you find yourself wandering through a world where nothing satisfied? Were you hungry and thirsty, and you didn't even—psalmist doesn't talk about just hunger and thirst of the body.

He says here that their soul fainted within them; and then he goes on at the end to say, He satisfies the longing soul, which is the emotions, the intellect, the will, and so forth. He fills those things with good things. It says here that they were wandering around.

And then something happened, and it's in verse 6. I want you to see that because that's the key verse, not just to this story, but to all of them. In verse 6, it says—and then this is what you underline in your Bible: “... *they cried to the LORD.*”

You're going to see that in each of the 4 stories it's going to talk about their desperate situation, and then it's going to say, “*they cried to the LORD.*” And then it's going to talk about God's deliverance and how they ought to praise God for His deliverance. Okay? But in each and every case, we're going to see it. I'll just—a little spoiler alert, he's going to say every time, “*they cried to the LORD.*” “*they cried to the LORD.*” “*they cried to the LORD.*”

Got me thinking about that. What does it mean to cry to the Lord? Because I think it goes way beyond praying, personally. I talk to people who will say to me, well, this situation is going on in my life and we've prayed about it, but—and they always give that but, like your God didn't come through for me.

And my response is, I think you need to cry out to the Lord. Pastor, I just told you I was praying. That's not what I said. We can pray, oh Lord, but then there's crying out to the Lord.

Do you know that even Jesus cried out to His Father? Can I show you a passage from Hebrews up on the screen? This is a great passage. It says:

**Hebrews 5:7 (ESV)**

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.*

*In the days of his flesh* (meaning in the days of His earthly sojourn), *Jesus offered up prayers and supplications*, (look at this) *with loud cries and tears*, to

*him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.*

Jesus cried out to His God, His Father. Isn't that incredible? And you know what, guys? There are times when life produces a level of pain that is so intense, so physically and emotionally draining that we just can't take it anymore. And I'm sure you've probably been there. You just can't, I can't go one more step, and we've tried everything we know to work out our problem, or to get some relief and nothing has helped.

People will often say to me at a point like that, Pastor, what else can I do? And like I said, I know they've prayed but I want to tell them, you need to cry out to the Lord with all your heart, because I believe this Psalm assures me that when we do, God responds to the cry of the heart in ways that a simple prayer just sometimes just doesn't scratch that itch.

I want you to go on and see this in the next story, verse 10.

*“Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
prisoners in affliction and in irons,”*

You ever been in slavery? It could be all different slavery; maybe an addiction, a behavioral kind of a thing that just controlled your life. Maybe this is your story. Why were they in affliction? It says:

*“<sup>11</sup> for they had rebelled against the words of God,  
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.”*

In other words, they threw God's Word behind their back.

*“<sup>12</sup> So he bowed their hearts down with hard labor;  
they fell down, with none to help.”*

Look at verse 13. Here we go.

*“<sup>13</sup> Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.  
<sup>14</sup> He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,  
and burst their bonds apart.”*

And then he says for that story:

*“<sup>15</sup> Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wondrous works to the children of man!  
<sup>16</sup> For he shatters the doors of bronze  
and cuts in two the bars of iron.”*

Woohoo, praise the Lord! Any of those people that are in slavery, you talk to somebody in there, they're saying, man, I'm a slave to this sin in my life. You can say, yeah, man, you're in prison, but my God breaks through the bars, cuts them in two. He shatters the doors of bronze that hold you in and keep you from being who God created you to be. God can bring you through it. What do I need to do? Cry out to the Lord. Cry out to the Lord. That's what you need to do. Don't come to me. Cry out to the Lord.

Next story.

*“<sup>17</sup> Some were fools through their sinful ways, (boy, that's probably pretty much all of us, huh?)  
and because of their iniquities suffered affliction;  
<sup>18</sup> they loathed any kind of food,  
and they drew near to the gates of death.*

*<sup>19</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.  
<sup>20</sup> He sent out his word and healed them,  
and delivered them from their destruction.”*

Notice it's their destruction.

*“<sup>21</sup> Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wondrous works to the children of man!  
<sup>22</sup> And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving,  
and tell of his deeds in songs of joy!”*

Boy, I tell you, I think I many, many Christians can stand up and talk about their foolishness, their sinful, foolish ways. And they'll tell you, oh, man, I was so dumb, the things I did, and the things I ran after in this world, and I got myself into all kinds of trouble, and I even made myself sick, physically sick with my stupidity, and so forth. And I cried out to the Lord, and God delivered me and healed me, and now I praise Him for His steadfast love.

Is that your story?

Last one, story number 4, verse 23. It says:

*“Some went down to the sea in ships,  
doing business on the great waters;”*

Have you tried to find your deliverance through business and making money? It says:

*“<sup>24</sup> they saw the deeds of the LORD,  
his wondrous works in the deep.  
<sup>25</sup> For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,  
which lifted up the waves of the sea.  
<sup>26</sup> They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths...”*

Meaning, they're being tossed and turned on the waves; sounds to me like the stock market; it's like we're doing great, we're doing great, we're doing great, we're doing really bad; it's just like the waves sort of a thing.

*“...their courage melted away in their evil plight;  
<sup>27</sup> they reeled and staggered like drunken men  
and were at their wits' end.”*

Verse 28. Here it is:

*“Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.”* Fourth time in a row.

*“<sup>29</sup> He made the storm be still,  
and the waves of the sea were hushed.  
<sup>30</sup> Then they were glad that the waters were quiet,  
and he brought them to their desired haven.”*

We go after the things of the world to try to satisfy us, and it doesn't work. We just create storms and difficulties, and then we cry out to the Lord, and He brings us to our desired place.

It's like, this is what I was looking for, but I was trying to get there on my own. I was looking for satisfaction. I was looking for joy. I was looking for purpose. I was looking for meaning, but I was trying to find it by making a lot of money, and being a crackerjack businessman.

And all I found myself was a slave to my money, and a slave to the stock market that was up one day and down the next, or up one year and down the next. And I had a lot of money, and then I lost a lot of money, and then I had some more money, and then I lost it again.

And on and on it went until I finally said, I'm tired, I'm done with this. And I cried out to the Lord and He brought me to my desired haven, the place where I was looking for all along. It's beautiful.

Verse 31. We come to this:

*“Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wondrous works to the children of man!  
32 Let them extol him in the congregation of the people,  
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.”*

And then this is the final element of the Psalm from here to the end.

*33 He turns rivers into a desert,  
springs of water into thirsty ground,  
34 a fruitful land into a salty waste,  
because of the evil of its inhabitants.  
35 He turns a desert into pools of water,  
a parched land into springs of water.  
36 And there he lets the hungry dwell,  
and they establish a city to live in;  
37 they sow fields and plant vineyards  
and get a fruitful yield.  
38 By his blessing they multiply greatly,  
and he does not let their livestock diminish.  
39 When they are diminished and brought low  
through oppression, evil, and sorrow,  
40 he pours contempt on princes  
and makes them wander in trackless wastes;  
41 but he raises up the needy out of affliction  
and makes their families like flocks (meaning prosperous and many).  
42 The upright see it and are glad,  
and all wickedness shuts its mouth.”*

In other words, it has nothing to say but the goodness of God.

*“<sup>43</sup> Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things (in other words, let him consider these stories; let him consider these four stories); let them consider the steadfast love of the LORD.”*

Even in the midst of man's incredible rebellion and stupidity. We'll stop there. Let's pray.

Father, You are so faithful. Faithful and true. We praise You. We thank You. Lord, give us wisdom enough not to run after the things of this world as if they are the answer, but instead to come to You, the one who is the answer. The only One who can satisfy, the only one Lord who can fill our lives with every good and perfect gift.

Thank You for Your Word. Thank You for these four Psalms that we've covered tonight.

Lord, continue to fill us with insight and wisdom. Teach us Your ways.

We look to You in Jesus' precious name, amen.