

PRAYING THROUGH OUR DISCONNECTION

Psalm 103

Quick Recap

Psalm 103: A Rather Unusual Psalm Of Worship

Ps. 47: *“Clap your hands, all you peoples; Shout to God with a voice of triumph.”*

Ps. 66: *“Shout for joy to God, all the earth! ²Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious”.*

Ps. 95: *“Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! ²Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!*

Ps. 100: *“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! ²Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!*

Ps. 150: *“Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord in the sanctuary, ²Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!*

103:1 *“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.”*

Psalms 42-43. “Why are you so cast down, O my soul . . . hope in God.”

A Psalm To Pray When We’re Feeling Disconnected With God

Tracing Our Spiritual Benefits To A Benevolent Benefactor

Exodus 34:4-6 *“So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first. And he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand two tablets of stone. ⁵The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness...”*

“As a father shows compassion on his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.”

At The Center Of True Prayer: A Father-Child Relationship

“The most important thing that ever happens in prayer is letting ourselves be loved by God.”

—Brennan Manning

“Jesus said, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

—John 14:6

Psalm 103:

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

² *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,*

³ *who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,*

⁴ *who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,*

⁵ *who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

⁶ *The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.*

⁷ *He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.*

⁸ *The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*

⁹ *He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.*

¹⁰ *He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.*

¹¹ *For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; ¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.*

¹³ *As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.*

¹⁴ *For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.*

¹⁵ *As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field;*

¹⁶ *for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.*

¹⁷ *But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children,*

¹⁸ *to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.*

¹⁹ *The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.*

²⁰ *Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!*

²¹ *Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will!*

²² *Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!*

Questions for personal reflection and/or discussion:

1. Psalm 103 is a unique Psalm of praise because instead of the Psalmist (David) summoning the congregation, or the earth, or the angels, or the nations to worship, we find him here summoning his own soul. It's been suggested that David is doing this because he himself is struggling to express heartfelt worship on this particular occasion. Do you go through times when you find it difficult to worship or pray, due to feeling disconnected to God? What, do you suppose, causes you and other Christians to experience times of disconnection and apathy towards God?

2. As David ministers to his own soul, he ministers the gospel to himself in verses 1-5. As you look at each of these "benefits," how might any of them be prescribed to any form of detachment that you may be feeling? How can take these truths and make them applicable to your life situation?

3. As David continues to minister to his soul, he moves from meditating on God's blessing to the Blessor Himself. As David thinks about God's nature, he recalls Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai in Exodus 34, where God proclaims during His theophany that He is merciful and gracious. How does truly knowing, receiving and relying upon God's mercy and grace awaken your soul to God? What other Bible passages do you know of God's character that you can meditate upon?

4. David also mentions thinks of God like a father (which He is!). We can be certain that God is like a father whose love and devotion, compassion and mercy goes far beyond the example of our best earthly fathers. God, your Father, has found the way to save you, through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ. Knowing this, how might you dare to pray to the Greatest Father in the Universe?