

Part 4 – Compassionate, Gracious, Slow to Anger, and Plenteous in Mercy

In part 3 we saw David turn from speaking of how we should ‘bless’ our Heavenly Father (YHVH) to explaining *how* He rules. Thus, he revealed one of the things that is most important to our Heavenly Father – protecting His children from others who try to harm them (i.e. Satan and all those who serve him). Therefore, a key quality of our Heavenly Father is that (because He loves His children so much) He watches what goes on in the earth (as we learned back in Ps 11:4 and 102:19-20) to see that righteousness and judgment *are enforced for all those who are oppressed* (spiritually and physically). And, this is actually *why* He gave Israel (via Moses) His righteous Laws. For God’s Laws protect the innocent and punish the wicked. Further, God’s Laws also teach us *the difference between right and wrong*, and detail what the government is delegated to do versus what we, as individuals, are supposed to do. But, importantly, our Heavenly Father also promises that: even if government doesn’t enforce His Laws (to execute righteousness and judgment), He’ll *still* hear the cries of those who are oppressed. And we learned of several examples of this, from the way He judged Sodom and Gomorrah, to the way He freed Israel from Egyptian bondage, to the way He saved David many times throughout his life. Yet, our Heavenly Father also promised, specifically, to hear (and save) *individuals* who were oppressed. But, a key stipulation for God to hear our ‘cries’ to Him (and saving us) is that we fear (and revere) Him and ‘call upon Him’ in truth, which means we *must* be **sincerely** seeking truth (His Word). And that also means we *must* be willing to see our sins and kick them out. And this is as true for us living today, as it has been throughout *all time*.

And then, we also learned how the Lord (YHVH) *made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel*. And this simply means God truly revealed His *holy characteristics* to His people, Israel. Thus, the Lord (YHVH) ‘made known His ways’ (His ‘acts’ of righteousness and judgments) to Moses *through* giving His Laws to him (to give to Israel) *and* also showing Israel many miracles, which were ‘acts’ He performed *that validated* His power *and authority* to be their only “God”. And, this point is included here - in this Psalm that speaks of the “Coming Kingdom” (i.e. Jesus’ return) - *because* our Heavenly Father will *still* be executing righteousness and Judgment *when He returns* via Jesus Christ. Thus, He’s not done showing His ‘ways’ to the world! So, with the thought of God making known His ways (and acts) to Israel (and us today), let’s see what else David has to say in this *beautiful* Psalm...

Psalm 103

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Now, this is another part of how our Heavenly Father rules. Thus, this is also a part of His ‘righteousness and judgments’ (i.e. His ‘ways’ and ‘acts’) that the prior verses spoke of. For, our Heavenly Father is no tyrant. And, while He *does* want all His children to obey Him (because it’s to our benefit to do so, Deut 10:13), He knows we’re not ‘perfect’ (i.e. without sin) in these flesh

bodies (which is *why* He sent Jesus to atone for our sins, Rom 5:11; Col 1:14; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:12-15) and that's *why* He's *merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy*. Now, the word '**Lord**' here is God's sacred (and covenantal) name **Yehovah** which means (the) **self-Existent** or **Eternal** (#3068). [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/946>] So, His name *reveals* that our Heavenly Father (Yehovah) is the *only* one who has *always* existed and *always* will, which is why He is *eternal* (Rev 1:8, 4:9, 11:17, 16:5, 22:13). And the word '**merciful**' actually means to be **compassionate** (#7349) but the word '**gracious**' does indeed mean **gracious** (#2587) and comes from a prim root that means *to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior* as well as to **favor** or **bestow** (#2603), which helps us to understand what 'gracious' really means. And then the word '**slow**' means **long** (#750) while the word '**anger**' means **the nose** or **nostril** (hence, the *face*) and occasionally **a person**; but it also means **ire** (from the rapid breathing in passion), which is **intense** (and usually *openly*) **displayed anger** (#639). And then the word '**plenteous**' means **abundant** (in quantity, size, age, number, rank, quality) (#7227) and the word '**mercy**' actually means **kindness** (#2617) and comes from a prim root that means *to bow* (the neck only) **in courtesy to an equal**, i.e. **to be kind**. In Ex 34:6, the Lord (YHVH) said nearly the same thing when stating that He is: *merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth*, which is something David wisely reminded the Lord (YHVH) of when asking for His help (in Psalm 86:15).

And, of a truth, our Heavenly Father truly **is full of mercy** (kindness, i.e. not giving us totally what we deserve), grace (giving us what we don't deserve, such as blessings and protection) and compassion towards us; and He's *also* slow to anger (long-suffering) *because*, as Peter points out in 2 Peter 3:9, *He wants us to come to repentance* so we don't have to 'perish', which means to be blotted out of existence (at the end of the Millennium, Rev 20:10-15). The history of Israel's coming out of Egypt, and wandering in the wilderness, proves this fact – as does, truly, all of the History of Israel, *and* the first Advent of Jesus Christ, and even history *to this very day*. Further, as Paul explains in Heb 12:6-11, our Heavenly Father is also faithful (and patient) to chastise us when we need it. *Why?* For the same reason He shows us compassion, grace, mercy and is long suffering (patient) towards us, i.e. He loves us and sincerely *wants* us to come to a good repentance. *And*, after we have come to a good repentance, He also *doesn't* want us to go back to *habitual* sinning (as a way of life), so that's why He's faithful to **continue to** chastise those who He loves. As Paul explains (in Heb 12), God chastises us *for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness*. And while it's no fun to go through, if we take it humbly and patiently (and learn from it), then it will *yield* (produce) *the peaceable fruit of righteousness* with us, which is what we need to be able to live forever (John 15:2; 1 John 2:29; Rev 19:8). However, God's mercy, grace, compassion and being slow to anger comes with a *stipulation*: we *must* be **sincerely** seeking Him (truth), which means *we've got to be earnestly trying to* learn His 'ways' (His Word, i.e. His Laws) *and obey Him*. Verses 11-13 and 17-18 will really 'hammer home' this point...

Psalms 103

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

Now David continues to explain the ‘ways’ of our Heavenly Father. The word ‘**always**’ here means (in the context of this verse) **continually** (#5331) and the word ‘**chide**’ means **to toss**, i.e. **grapple**, (figuratively), **to wrangle**, i.e. **hold a controversy** and (by implication) **to defend** (#7378). It’s also been rendered as ‘**rebuke**’ (i.e. chastise), which is really the thought David’s conveying here. And then the word ‘**keep**’ means **to guard** or **to cherish** (anger) #5201) while the word ‘**forever**’ also means **eternity** or **always** (#5769). And the words ‘**his anger**’ are **not actually in the Hebrew manuscripts**; they were added, by the translators, for ‘better readability’ in the English (#9999). The *Companion Bible* (CB) has a note explaining that, *the reason* they added these words, is because this verse uses a figure of speech (*Ellipsis*, apx 6), which is when a gap is purposely left in a sentence, through the omission of some word or words. In the case of this verse, it’s an ‘*Absolute Ellipsis*’, which is where the omitted word (or words) are to be supplied *from the nature of the subject*, which was found in vs 8, regarding God’s being ‘slow to anger’. The fact that the word ‘keep’ also means to ‘cherish anger’ shows us that the translators adding the words ‘his anger’ was *not* ‘out of line’ with the *true* subject, and context, of this verse.

So, what this verse tells us is that, our Heavenly Father really is *not* a ‘hot head’ nor a tyrant just looking for people He can ‘burn in hell’. In other words, He really doesn’t *want* to punish us, nor does He want anyone to perish in the ‘lake of fire’ at the end of the Millennium (Rev 20:10-15). As 2 Peter 3:9 points out, the Lord (YHVH) *is not slack concerning his promise* [to punish sin], *as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*. Thus, as Rom 2:4 points out, it is the goodness (and longsuffering) of God that leads us to repentance. So, being angry is not a ‘way of life’ for our Heavenly Father. He’s only angry when it’s appropriate (righteous) and His anger doesn’t last forever. For His anger **is** subdued when we repent sincerely (and earnestly work to change our wicked ways) or, *after* He punishes the wicked. And it **is** a *righteous* thing for Him to punish the wicked (2 Thess 2:16). That’s why, after Jesus Christ returns (at His Second Advent) He IS going to pour out God’s ‘cup of wrath’ [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/418>] upon all those who refused to repent for their sins.

However, this ‘cup’ is NOT for those who remain loyal to Him. As Rom 5:9 says, when we are *justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him*. 1 Thess 5:9 also says that *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*. But, as Nah 1:2 declares, *God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies*. But, importantly, after ‘the cup’ (of God’s wrath) is poured out, then His anger will be subdued. And that’s *why* He won’t stay angry. Again, wrath is not a ‘way of life’ for our Heavenly Father. He only gets angry when it’s right to do so (i.e. righteous indignation). And, after the unrepentant

wicked ones are punished, His wrath will be ‘quenched’ (done with). In other words, once the wicked are rightfully punished, there’s no reason to remain angry. Likewise, after we have repented *sincerely*, our Heavenly Father is *happy* with us, *not angry* anymore.

Psalm 103

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Here again David explains the ‘ways’ of the Lord (YHVH). The word ‘**dealt**’ means *to do or make*, in the broadest sense and widest application (#6213) and the word ‘**sins**’ here means *a crime* or *its penalty* (#2399). And it comes from a prim root that means *to miss*, and hence (figuratively and generally) also means *to sin*; but (by inference) it can also mean, *to forfeit, lack, expiate, repent*, (causatively) *lead astray* or *condemn* (#2398). So, our Heavenly Father doesn’t punish us for our sins (i.e. crimes, which means when we break His Laws) to the full extent we really deserve. Nor has He *rewarded us according to our iniquities*. The word ‘**rewarded**’ here means *to treat a person* (well or ill), i.e. *benefit* or *requite*; by implication (of toil), *to ripen*, i.e. (specifically) *to wean* (#1580). And the word ‘**iniquities**’ means *perversity* or (moral) *evil* (#5771) and comes from a word that means *to crook* (#5753) and has also been rendered as crooked, pervert, perverse, do wickedly and do wrong. So, our Heavenly Father (YHVH) also does not treat us (reward) according to our perversities (evil), which again means He gives us a *lighter* punishment (chastisements) than we really deserve.

But we must always remember the *stipulation* to this is that we *must* be willing to see our sins, repent for them *sincerely* and *earnestly strive* to change them, *from the heart*. And, as David explained back in Ps 32, this also means we must study His Word (which helps us to see our sins and cleanses our inner man) and strive to obey Him. And, as Peter also taught us, in 1 Peter 2:1-3, *Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*. So, once we’ve ‘tasted’ the graciousness of the Lord (YHVH) – which means we’ve been forgiven our sins – we *must* put away things like malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies and evil speaking (i.e. the ‘old man’, Rom 6:6, Eph 4:22, Col 3:9, Luke 9:23) and desire the ‘milk’ (food) of God’s Word so we can *continue to grow spiritually mature*, i.e. put on the ‘new man’, which *is created in righteousness and true holiness* (Eph 4:24). And, we should *never* forget how merciful our Heavenly Father is to punish (chasten) us *less* than we deserve. He *only* chastens us, to the extent that is needed, to help us to turn from our sins and get back on the ‘right path’ (which His Word teaches us) ...

Psalm 103

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Now, this is a *beautiful* verse, for David gives us an analogy we can see, with our own eyes, to explain something we *cannot* see with our fleshly eyes. Look up towards the sky... can you really comprehend how high the clouds are? Or, where does heaven stop? Or, at night, look up at the stars... can you really comprehend how high up they are compared to where you are on earth? So, the analogy really expresses the infinite mercy God has towards us. And, of course, the word ‘**mercy**’ here again means *kindness* (#2617) and, interestingly, the word ‘**great**’ (as in great is His mercy) means *to be strong* and, by implication, *to prevail* (#1396). So, God’s mercy (i.e. kindness) prevails (is stronger) ‘*high above*’ (i.e. *it soars*, #1361) that which we (on earth) can truly comprehend. But, yet again, there is a stipulation to His mercy (kindness). Did you catch it? God’s mercy (kindness) is infinitely ‘high above’ (it soars and prevails stronger) than what we can truly comprehend... but *only to those who fear Him*.

Now, the word ‘**fear**’ here means *fearing* as well as *reverent* (#3373) and truly, it we should ‘fear’ God in both respects. We *should* fear Him in regards to fearing to disobey Him, for that’s what causes us to ‘depart from evil’. As Prov 16:6 says, *by mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil*. So, fearing God’s punishments for sin, **is** what should cause us to strive not to sin, i.e. depart from evil. And the reason He gives us such infinite mercy (and the truth, which is His Word, John 17:17) is so that our iniquity (#5771 - perverse, evil, i.e. corrupted spirit) can be purged (#3722, expiated, canceled, i.e. cleansed). Thus, when we do fear to do evil, that *also cause us to revere* our Heavenly Father, which means to give Him great honor and respect. And that reverence stems, not only from the fact that He’s got more power (and authority) to punish us for our sins, but *also* from the fact that He is **so** merciful to forgive us, gracious to heal us and faithful to protect us *after* we do repent and strive to obey Him, sincerely. As David wrote back in Ps 31:19: *Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!*

Psalms 103

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Again, David uses an analogy to explain God’s *infinite* mercy (kindness) towards those who fear (and revere) Him. Look to the west... and then look to the east... how far is it between? Truly, the furthest point to the east is *infinity* from the furthest point to the west. And that’s *exactly* David’s point. Now, the words ‘**as far as**’ and ‘**removed**’ are all the same Hebrew word, which is a prim root that means *to widen* (in any direction), i.e. (intransitively) *recede* or (transitively) *remove* (literally or figuratively, of place or relation) (#7368). And the ‘**east**’ of course means *the east* but also *the sunrise* (#4217); and likewise, the ‘**west**’ means *the west* but also *the sunset* (#4628). So, as the rising of the sun (east) to the going down of the sun (west) are – i.e. **they are as far as two points can be from each other** - that’s how far the Lord (YHVH) has removed our transgressions from us! As our Heavenly Father said, in Isa 44:22, *I have blotted out, as a thick*

cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. The words ‘**blotted out**’ here mean **to stroke** or **rub**, i.e. (by implication), **to erase** (#4229). So, just as a cloud can dissipate into nothing, so too are our transgressions *totally done away with*, i.e. they are ‘erased’ from His ‘book’ (Ex 32:33; Deut 32:34; Mal 3:16-17; Ps 69:28; Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5, 5:8, 8:3-4, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12-15, 21:27, 22:19). In modern terms, you could say they have been ‘deleted’, i.e. just as when you push the ‘delete’ button on your keyboard, the word (or numbers) totally disappears! And this is also written in the New Testament. In Acts 3:19, Peter said: *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...* the words ‘**blotted out**’ here are a Greek word that means **to smear out**, i.e. **obliterate** (*erase tears*, figuratively, *pardon sin*) (#1813). So, again it means to **totally do away with** (obliterate, erase, etc.) our transgressions!

Now, the word ‘**transgressions**’ here means **a revolt - national, moral or religious** (#6588) and has also been rendered as *rebellion, sin* and *trespass*. And it comes from a prim root that means **to break away** (*from just authority*), i.e. **trespass, apostatize or quarrel** (#6586). But, notice how verse 10, and this verse 11, refer to three different things: sin, iniquities and transgressions... as we learned when studying Psalm 32, **there’s a reason for speaking of these three terms**. To refresh our memory, let’s look at what Ps 32:1-2 said: *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* The words ‘transgression’ and ‘iniquity’ in both Ps 32:1-2 and this Ps 103:10,12 are exactly the same; and the word ‘sin(s) in Ps 32:1 and here in Ps 103:10 are very close. The word ‘sin’, in Ps 32:1, is #2401, which means *an offence, or a sacrifice for it* – but it comes from #2399 (which means *a crime or its penalty*), which is what the word ‘sins’ here in Ps 103:10 **is**. So, just as he did back in Psalm 32, David is speaking of several words that *appear* to be similar in meaning, but are actually distinctly different from each other. And, essentially ‘**transgression**’ means a **revolt** (rebellion) which happens **when we break away from following God’s Word** (and His Laws in it) and follow our own ‘heart’ (carnal mind) and/or the ‘ways of the world’, which are *not* of the Father but of the Devil, a.k.a. Satan (1 John 2:15-17). And ‘**sin**’ is an actual **crime or offense**, which means **breaking God’s Laws**. And ‘**iniquity**’ is **evil or perverseness** (corruption); meaning **to allow our sinful (carnal) nature to control us so that we rebel against God in habitually breaking His laws without caring that we are doing so**.

So, (1) ‘**transgression**’ is being in apostasy, or rebelling against God, while (2) ‘**sin**’ is breaking His Laws and (3) ‘**iniquity**’ is being a morally evil person; i.e. **having a perverse (or evil) spirit thus refers to what goes on in someone’s heart and mind**. So, these three things cover (1) breaking God’s Laws in our heart and mind, (2) breaking God’s Laws in our words and/or actions and (3) actually rebellious against the Lord (YHVH), which means you reject His chastisements and will not submit yourself to His Law no matter what. You sin habitually, meaning, *as a lifestyle*. So, when David speaks of being forgiven our sins, iniquities and our

transgressions, this means we must *truly* have a change of heart (desires, emotions, intentions and motivations), a change of mind (thought process) and a change of lifestyle *that is lasting*. It's easy to get on an 'emotional high' and repent when we *first* hear of Jesus, but once the emotions of the 'altar call' wear off, and you go back to your daily life, *you **can't** go back to begin the person you were before.* **You have to be personally responsible to change your life from the inside out.** You *have* to work, diligently and sincerely, each and every day, to study God's Word and understand it and obey it, *from the heart*. It's a change of mind, heart and lifestyle *that must be real – it can't be faked* - and it truly is a change of life, *for your entire life*. Growing mature in God's Word *takes all of your life*. It's not a 'one time thing' and then you can go on your merry way and do whatever you want. You must willingly live your life to serve and obey the Lord (YHVH) and His Son, Jesus Christ, forever (1 Pt 4:1-2). As Jesus said in John 8:31-32: *If ye continue in my word, **then** are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* The word 'continue' here is *meno* (#3306), which means **to stay** (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy). We must **stay in the truth** (i.e. God's Word) **our entire life** or else **we're not sincerely following Him**.

And, *not doing so*, is how we 'slip' back into our 'old life' of rebelling against God. This is why Prov 16:6 says: *by mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil*. In order to have our morally evil (perverse/corrupt) spirit cleansed, we must not only obtain mercy from God (through a good repentance) but we must also put truth into our 'inward parts', meaning our heart (desires, emotions, intentions and motivations) and mind (thought process). Because, if we don't learn how to please God (which we do by studying His Word and obeying it sincerely) then *our 'repentance' will be short lived*. You can learn more about this in chapter 32 of this great book of the Psalms [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/349], but the point to our study here is that our Heavenly Father is **so** merciful, **so** gracious, **so** compassionate and slow to anger (long-suffering) that He **will** forgive us for all of these things (sins, iniquities and transgressions) **IF** we *whole-heartedly* repent **and work** to change our self, from the inside out (i.e. from our heart, to our mind, to our works to our actions). And, of course, this amazing grace (*total* forgiveness) is something we should always remember to 'bless' (thank and praise) our Heavenly Father for!

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

*7 **Rooted and built up in him**, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

Col 2:6-7

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

*16 For which cause **we faint not**; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Cor 4:14-18

We'll pick this up in part 5...

AMEN.