

Part 6 – The Stormy Sea

In part 5 we learned that only fools (those who are *morally stupid*) follow (live their life according to) rebellion, which is transgressing against God's Word (His *righteous* Laws that He gave us *for our benefit*, Deut 10:13). And, their perverseness (obstinate, and filthy, heart) is *what* causes them to rebel. And their rebellion is *what* causes afflictions to come upon them. So, what this boils down to is that, they truly bring upon themselves their own troubles! And that's why they draw near to the 'gates of death' (spiritual death); for when they loath the only true good spiritual food there is (God's Word) they are truly bringing about their own spiritual death. But we also learned that, even a fool can be 'saved' when they have a *true* change of heart and *earnestly* turn back to our Heavenly Father (in *sincere* repentance). And then we learned just how our Heavenly Father truly 'saves' us; it is through His healing (and delivering) Word, which is Jesus Christ. For, Jesus not only taught us what God's Word *really* means (the truth) but He also shed His righteous blood to atone for our sins, *if only* we believe upon (and obey) Him. And we covered many Scriptures that document Jesus Christ truly was *sent by God* to save His children (by teaching us truth *and* atoning for our sins). Therefore, *true* salvation *only* comes from accepting the Living Word (Jesus Christ), studying His written Word (the Bible), accepting His Holy Spirit (which helps us to change our heart and mind) and striving to *sincerely* obey our Heavenly Father for *the rest* of our life in the flesh (1 Pt 4:1-2). And we'll now pick up, in this Psalm, with a thought from the Psalmist concerning the 'delivering, and healing, Word'...

Psalm 107

21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

This is now the *third* time the Psalmist has written (verbatim) that he wishes *all* people would praise the Lord (YHWH) for His goodness *and* many wonderful works towards mankind. And, as we know by now, anytime something is repeated (in the Bible) it's done *for emphasis*. So, this is now a '**triple**' *emphasis* of the Psalmist's 'wish' that all people would truly worship, and obey, the Lord. For when this happens, that means *all* those who refuse to do so are *completely* done away with (Rev 20:15-20) so the rest of us can live in perfect peace, and safety, *forevermore* (Rev 21-22)!

Psalm 107

22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

Now, this is an additional 'wish' (of the Psalmist) that wasn't with the other verses (8, 15). And this lets us know that, when someone has been saved from death by God's power, the appropriate response is to *worship* Him. And truly, when we feel the sweet peace (Isa 26:3) that comes from the healing (Ps 23:2-3), and delivering (Ps 91:4) Word of God (and His Holy Spirit, John 6:63),

this *will* cause us to be *very* thankful to our Heavenly Father! And notice he's not speaking of *outward* worship (physical sacrifices), but *inward* worship - such as the offering of *spiritual* sacrifices 'of thanksgiving'. The word '**thanksgiving**' here means (by implication) **avowal**, or (usually) **adoration** (#8426). And, as we've learned before, thanking our Heavenly Father is not only something He enjoys, but it's actually *very good for us* too. For it causes us to remember all that our Heavenly Father has done for us (i.e. counting our blessings); and that helps us to keep our heart and mind *focused on reality* (God's Word and His promises) *rather than* our fleshly fears, lusts, problems, etc. And this is important because *we are in a spiritual war* (Eph 6) and our enemy (Satan, and those who follow him; Mth 13:39, 1 Pt 5:8, James 4:4) tries to get us *distracted from the truth* (Gods' Word) so we are *easily manipulated* by fear, worry, anxieties, lusts, pride and greed (etc.). That's why Paul tells us that faith (in God's Word) is our *spiritual* shield (Eph 6:16) that protects us from *all* the 'fiery darts' (lies) that Satan (and others serving him) throw at us.

But the Psalmist also speaks of how we (who are saved by Jesus Christ, who is the *Living Word* of God *that* heals, saves and protects us) *should* 'declare' (recount and celebrate, #5608) God's works with rejoicing (shouts of joy, #7440). And while the Psalmist was likely thinking about 'praise and worship' from singing, and playing, instruments (and there's nothing wrong with that), the most important way we can declare God's righteous works (and ways) is simply *by obeying Him*. As Jesus said, *let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven* (Matt 5:16). Moreover, this also includes planting *spiritual* 'seeds' of truth (with others) *when* the opportunity arises. As Paul wrote, we should *walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time*. And we 'redeem' (take) the 'time' (opportunity) by letting our *speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man* (Col 4:5-6). So, anytime you have the opportunity to **do** what's right, take it! And any time you have the opportunity to **share truth** (no matter how small it might seem), take it! For *that* is just as pleasing to our Heavenly Father (perhaps even more so) as singing Him songs and lifting up your hands to Him. As Jesus said, **if** we really love Him, we'll *obey* His commandments (John 14:15-23), which *includes* loving one another (John 13:34) and also means sharing the truth with them (John 21:16-17) in a way they can understand (i.e. at the level of understanding they are at). As it is written, *to love God with all the heart, and with all the understanding* [mind], *and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices* (Mark 12:33). And, when we do that, we are '**not far**' from the Kingdom of God (Mark 12:34)!

Psalms 107

23 *They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;*

Now the Psalmist is going to use an analogy to teach us a wise lesson about life. This is a common way our Heavenly Father teaches us, which is why Jesus used this method a lot too via the many parables He gave us. So, the analogy concerns those who work on ships for merchants. The word ‘**business**’ here means *employment* (never servile) or *work* (#4399), so it’s speaking of those who work on ships that go out to sea for trade purposes ...

Psalms 107

24 These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

So, those who work (on ships) for merchants spend a lot of time at sea. Thus, they see the works of the Lord (YHVH, #3068) which are at sea. And truly, the sea itself is an amazing creation of our Heavenly Father, as we learned in Psalm 104 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/1392]. The word ‘**wonders**’ here means *to distinguish* (literally or figuratively) and, by implication, it can also mean *to be* (or, *make*) *great, difficult, wonderful* (#6381). So, the Psalmist is speaking of the great, difficult and wonderful works of God, that are in the depths of the sea – that’s what those who work on ships see, simply because they are out on the sea *a lot*. So, they not only get to behold the beauty of the vast sea (which seems infinite when you are out on it), but also the beauty of the sky (along with beautiful sunrises and sunsets), the clouds and even the creatures that live in the sea (whales and such). However, they also get to see...

Psalms 107

25 For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.

As any sailor knows, when you are out at sea there’s always the threat of storms. And truly, the storms are also a wondrous work of the Lord (YHVH) *because* He controls His creation. And, even though it’s frightening, it’s still *awesome* to see just *how high* waves can be; and to experience the *power* of them is something that truly can put the ‘fear of God’ in you. And, it truly makes a person feel pretty ‘small’ when you are in a ship, totally at the ‘mercy’ of the sea! The word ‘**melted**’ (in vs 26) means, figuratively, *to fear* or *faint* (#4127). So, when the sailors ‘reel to and fro’ - from the power of the waves and wind at sea – they do stagger like a drunken man because, it’s impossible to walk normally on the ship when it’s being tossed about from the wind, and the waves, of the sea. And, this *does* make the sailors ‘at their wits’ end, which is an expression we still use today. In the Hebrew, however, the word ‘**wits**’ means *wisdom* (in a good sense, #2451) and the word ‘**end**’ means *to make away* with or, *to destroy* (#1104), so it’s implying that when the sea gets too rough, there’s nothing the sailors can do about it. They have no more wisdom, of what to do, when the sea gets to a certain point of ferocity. The *Companion Bible* renders this as: ‘*all their wisdom swallows itself*’. So, the point the Psalmist is making is

that, those who work on the sea *well know* the trouble that can come up when a storm arises. And, while they are very skilled in doing all they can to take care of the boat, they still are at the ‘mercy’ of the sea’s powerful waves that come from the mighty winds. And, what this boils down to is that, they truly are at the ‘mercy of’ *our Heavenly Father* who has *full control* of all His creation, *including* the sea, which the parting of the Red Sea certainly proved (Ex 14) ...

Psalms 107

28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

This is now the *fourth* time this verse (verbatim) has been repeated in this great Psalm 107 (verses 6, 13 and 18 were the first three times). So, this is now a ***quadruple emphasis*** to *stress the importance of* crying unto the Lord (YHVH) in times of trouble because (when we’re sincerely repentant) *He will help us*. It’s often been said that ‘there’s no atheists in a foxhole’ because, when most people are faced with a life a death situation (that war often brings), they usually **do** come around to believing in God *because* their fear causes them to want to cry out to the Lord (YHVH) for help. But the same could probably be said of the sailors who have been caught in a terrible sea storm! Truly, hard times have a way of causing people to call out to our Heavenly Father for help. For, when you’ve done all you can do, it’s natural for people to cry out to our Creator (YHVH, #3068) for help! And that’s the very reason our Heavenly Father chastens us (Heb 12) ...

Psalms 107

29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

So, when a terrible storm arises, and the sailors cannot do anything more, they often cry out to the Lord (YHVH) for help. And, when they are sincere, our Heavenly Father does help them. And He is fully able to make the storm calm down, even to the point of the waves being totally still again. We’ve got a wonderful example of this from the New Testament...

*35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, **Let us pass over unto the other side.***

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

*37 And **there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.***

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

*39 And **he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.***

40 And he said unto them, *Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?*

41 And they **feared exceedingly**, and said one to another, **What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?**

Mark 4:35-41

Several of the disciples who were in the ship with Jesus Christ were professional fishermen; so they truly would have fit the example, this Psalm 107 has been speaking of, in the past few verses. And when the waves began to sink the ship, they knew who to call out to for help, Jesus Christ! And that was befitting because, Jesus Christ is not only the Living Word (who heals and delivers us, as this ‘Deuteronomy book’ of the Psalms explains) but He’s also God incarnate (John 1:1,14). So, by calling out to the Living Word - that was sleeping in the boat with them - they did the right thing! However, Jesus had *already* told them they *were* going to pass over to the other side (vs 35), so that’s why He asked them why they didn’t have faith they would do so. But, the point to our study is that, Jesus Christ showed that God has *full* power over His creation, even the tumultuous sea, by calming the sea with just three little words, “Peace be still”! And, even if Jesus had not been in the ship with them, the Lord (YHVH) still could have (and would have if they called out to Him sincerely) calmed the sea.

And, while this account in Mark tells us the disciples *exceedingly* ‘feared’ Jesus after He calmed the sea (which means they had a *profound* amount of respect, and godly fear, for Him), this Psalm 107:30 says of the sailors in this analogy: *Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.* So, like the disciples, those sailors who experience a terrible storm are also *very* ‘glad’ (blithe or gleesome, #8055) when the sea is finally ‘quiet’ (subsided, #8367) again; and, they are also thankful when the Lord (YHVH) ‘bringeth’ (guides, #5148) them to their desired ‘haven’ (harbor, #4231).

Now, this analogy (of a physical storm coming upon those who are helplessly sailing on the sea) is truly a wonderful ‘life lesson’ for us today. For, just as a sailor *will* experience (at some point in his career) a storm that’s *so terrible* it seems like he’s going to die, so too will we have troubles in life. And some of our troubles do seem like we’re not going to get out of them. We either feel that we’ll have a mental breakdown or that we’ll literally die. Yet, just as the sailors in this analogy (and Jesus’ disciples), we *should remember* to ‘call upon’ our Heavenly Father (in Jesus’ name, John 14:13-14, John 15:17, John 16:23-26) whenever we need His help. For, as Paul pointed out, in 1 Cor 10:13, there’s *nothing* we’ll go through in life that our Heavenly Father (via Jesus Christ, the Living and healing, Word) cannot help us with. And, when we are *sincerely* repentant, He will *always* help us; either by giving us the strength to get through it and/or by giving us a way to escape it. Further, there’s no temptation, or trouble, that we experience that others have not experienced to. And we have *many* examples of people who were in great troubles (from David, to Daniel, to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, to Moses, to Peter, Paul and the other disciples) and the Lord (YHVH) delivered them all!

And, as Paul wrote, in 2 Cor 11:23-27, he went through *a lot* of difficulties while spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ: he was beaten several times, put in prison, threatened to be killed, shipwrecked, bitten by a snake, sick, hungry, and was in many dangerous situations - *but* the Lord (YHVH) delivered him out of *them all* because He was serving the Lord God Almighty (YHVH/Jesus Christ)! And that's why he said that he learned to be content with whatever his situation was, *because* he knew that he could do *all things through Christ which strengtheneth* him (Phil 4:11-13). As Peter also wrote, *the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished* (2 Peter 2:9). And Paul also summed it up, in 2 Thess 3:3, when he wrote: *the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil*. Now, **the key** to obtaining help from our Heavenly Father is found in another historical account which actually involves another time the disciples were sailing across a sea, and found themselves caught up in a storm. Check it out...

*22 And straightway **Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.***

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

*24 But **the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.***

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

*27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, **Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.***

*28 And Peter answered him and said, **Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.***

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

Matt 14:22-33

So, this account shows us that, not only was Jesus able to walk on the water, but Peter did so as well (after the Lord gave him the 'ok')... and this was during storm! But, the 'key point' to our study here is... what happened to Peter after he looked at the 'boisterous wind' (and the waves they caused)? Yup, he began to sink! And this is an *excellent* example (1 Cor 10:11) of what we should **not** do! It teaches us that, no matter how hard life gets (no matter how 'stormy' it seems

or how many ‘winds’ of lies and slanders come against) we should **not** take our eyes off of Jesus Christ! For, Peter was able to literally walk on the water *when* he kept his eyes on Jesus! Likewise, so can we overcome *all* things that come against (and upon) us, so long as we keep our ‘eyes’ (heart and mind, Eph 1:18) upon Jesus Christ (the Word of God)! Yet, if we do falter, as Peter did (looking at the winds and the waves), we should definitely do as Peter did as say, “*Lord, save me*”! Notice how Jesus didn’t waste any time. He ‘immediately’ reached His hand out, and caught Peter, and *kept him from sinking*! And this will *always* be the response of the Lord (YHVH) *when* we call out to Him in sincerity *and* truth (Ps 145:18; 1 Cor 5:8, etc.).

So, this beautiful example (here in Ps 107:23-30) gives us a critical lesson for our life. For, while we might never go onto a ship, and experience the dangers of the sea, we *will* have *some* ‘rough sailing’ in our own personal lives. Yet, as Peter taught us, if we keep our spiritual eyes (heart and mind) upon Jesus Christ (God’s Word) then the Lord (YHVH) will always reach out and help us! And further to this, so long as we continue to study God’s Word, and earnestly try to obey it (from the heart), our Heavenly Father *will* see to it that *much* of our life is ‘smooth sailing’, simply because *we are His servants*. And He knows what we need *and* what we can handle. Remember, 1 Cor 10:13 promises us He’ll never let us be tempted, or tested, above what we can handle. But, our Heavenly Father will allow some ‘rough sailing’ in our life to come along, simply because the hard times test our faith in Him and, if we succeed in trusting Him through the hard times, make our faith in Him much, much stronger! Moreover, just as the sailors in this analogy had a ‘desired haven’, so do we. Is not our desire to ‘go to heaven’? And we can be assured that, so long as we continue to keep our spiritual eyes (heart and mind) upon the Lord (YHVH, i.e. God’s Word), *faithfully* obey Him, *and* call out to Him when we need help (in faith), then He *will* indeed guide us to our ‘desired haven’ as well...

31 *What shall we then say to these things? **If God be for us, who can be against us?***

32 *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

33 *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? **It is God that justifieth.***

34 *Who is he that condemneth? **It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.***

35 ***Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

36 *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

37 ***Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.***

38 *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

39 *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Rom 8:31-39

We'll pick this up in part 7...

AMEN.