

## Revisiting Psalm 107 in 2021: God Is Bigger Than My Story

1. Our group focused on **Psalm 107** on 2/16/20, a month before the COVID 19 lockdown that started during March 2020. Reflect on how your understanding of *who God is to you and to his people* has changed from February 2020 to now, October 2021.

Read the cry to the LORD our God in **Psalm 106:47**. **Psalm 107** starts out like **Psalm 106**, with an ancient liturgy extolling the LORD's goodness and steadfast love (See also Jeremiah 33:11). But then **Psalm 107** goes a different direction and becomes *an answer to the cry for help* that ends **Psalm 106**. This is the strongest link in the Psalms between the closing psalm of one book and the opening psalm of the next book, the link between *Book IV* and *Book V* of the Psalms.

Read **Psalm 107:1-3**, recalling **Exodus 34:6-7**, the central confessional passage for the OT about God's gracious character and purpose, extending unending love and forgiveness to thousands of generations.

Notice the words used to describe God in **107:1-3**:

good (**tov**=good in the widest sense, everything good you can think of, God is better and best)

steadfast love (**hesed**=unfailing love, covenant love, faithful and loyal love, "never runs out" love, merciful and kind love, enduring love)

What is the connection between verses 1 and 2 of **Psalm 107**? What are the redeemed of the LORD told to say? (*"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so..."*)

2. **Psalm 106's** ending cry for help is answered by **Psalm 107's** four examples of God rescuing people who cry to him in their trouble/distress. These four examples form a community song of thanksgiving with repetitions:

One of the enduring delights of this psalm is **repetition**—repeated descriptions of threatening situations, repeated recourse to prayer, repeated divine response, repeated calls to thankfulness. (*New Bible Commentary*, p. 557)

Read the four examples of trouble and distress (vv.4-9, vv.10-16, vv.17-22, vv. 23-32).

Notice what words, phrases, and images speak to you? What seems to draw you? Why? What life experiences of your own or others help you relate to the troubles described?

The circumstances of **Psalm 107** include human suffering due to human limitation and also suffering due to human sin. Sometimes the reasons for suffering are mixed, both self-inflicted and completely beyond one's control. How does **Psalm 107** present *God's response* to the wide variety of people in distress who cry out for rescue?

3. Notice the repeated calls to thankfulness in **107:8-9, 15-16, 21-22, 31-32**. How do these calls to practice thankfulness develop the theme presented in **107:2**?

Which of these *four calls to gratitude* draws you most strongly now? Why?

How would you describe what **Psalm 107** teaches about what redeemed, rescued people need to be learning to do? We need to learn to feel and express gratitude for...what?

5. **Psalm 107** ends with a wisdom meditation leading us to reflect on how the LORD vindicates Himself through reversals (**107:33-43**). Whom do the Lord's reversals ultimately benefit?

Think of examples of this teaching about "reversals" from the Gospels and the teaching ministry of Jesus.

Ponder Jesus Christ's life, crucifixion and death, resurrection and ascension. What wondrous, mighty acts of love on behalf of whoever will believe and receive God's goodness and enduring love!

Then reflect on your own life, "hidden with Christ in God." (Colossians 3:3)

Our Triune God, the LORD of all, is bigger than each of our individual stories and bigger than the stories of nations and cultures.