Psalm 103

“Bless the Lord, O my soul!”

1. **Intro:**
   1.1. Psalm 103 –
      1.1.1. Ps.103 & 104 are companion Psalms.
         1.1.1.1. **Note:** matching endings. {Already how does this affect your understanding of the Psalm’s content?}
         1.1.1.2. “In the galaxy of the Psalter these are twin stars of the 1st magnitude!” (Derrick Kidner)
      1.1.2. If you ever have trouble praising the Lord turn to this Psalm.
         1.1.2.1. “We often”, as Spurgeon said, “write our blessings in the sand, & we engrave our complaints in the marble!”
      1.1.3. David does make one request in this Psalm. – it is just pure Praise!
         1.1.3.1. Q: Can you agree w/the new converted sailor who said, “To save such a sinner as I am!...He shall never hear the end of it!”
         1.1.3.2. Q: Do you ever pray to God for the sole purpose of praising Him?
         1.1.3.3. Q: Could you pray this long w/o asking for something?
   1.2. **Outline:** Praise for Personal Blessings! Praise for National Blessings! Praise for All Creation!

2. **Bless the Lord, O my soul!** (Ps.103)
   2.1. **PRAISE FOR...PERSONAL BLESSINGS!** (1-5)
   2.2. Q: When is it right to talk to yourself?
      2.2.1. Here David carries on a public dialogue w/himself!
   2.3. (1,2) Praise…w/your entire being!
      2.3.1. “O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise!”
      2.3.2. “Man was made to worship. He can’t help but worship. All that remains is to see who or what he gives his worship to!”

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1 RBC; pg.3; What kind of worship is God looking for? (pamphlet)
2.4. (2) Q: Why should we praise God? – Because of all His benefits! – And Q: What are they…here’s a list!(vs.3-5)

2.4.1. Forget not – Often times when we forget to Praise Him, it is deeper than “absent-mindedness!”

2.4.1.1. 2 Chron.32:25 “But Hezekiah's heart was proud and he did not respond to the kindness shown him;”

2.4.1.2. See same issue in Deut.8:10-14.

2.4.2. He heals all your diseases – Often in the bible, sin is compared to sickness, & salvation is compared to health.

2.5. (3-5) Here comes a parade of the benefits of Gods salvation!

2.5.1. Note 6-pack of verbs: forgives, heals, redeems, crowns, satisfies, & renews.

2.5.1.1. But salvation is not a step-by-step procedure to go through, but a vast country to explore!

2.5.1.2. Something else…This Psalm expresses the experience not the doctrine(of salvation). This is what it “feels” like to be saved!

2.5.1.3. Roy Clement(pastor of Eden Bible Church in Cambridge, England) said, “He is cataloguing the goodness of God; enumerating his blessings, lest in a moment of depression or backsliding, he souls forget the source of his prosperity & take God’s grace for granted.”

2.5.1.4. We can add to this list of His benefits: Life, health, home, food, Mercy, Grace, Victory over sin, etc.

2.5.2. What God has done for us far exceeds anything we have done for or against Him! ☺

2.5.3. Note all the “alls” we have here!

2.5.4. (3) The infirmary of the soul!

2.5.5. (5) Eagle – Like an eagle that remains strong throughout its long life, the psalmist was spiritually vigorous under God's hand.

2.5.5.1. “The eagle molts, loses its old feathers, gets a new coat & soars again!” (Warren Wiersbe)

2.5.5.2. Is.40:30,31 “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles...”
2.6. **PRAISE FOR…NATIONAL BLESSINGS!** (6-18)

2.7. (6,7) There is no story like the **Exodus** for a record of human unworthiness…of *Grace abounding*…& *benefits forgotten*!

2.8. (8) Here is almost word for word **God's self-portrait** from Ex.34:6, when He passed before Moses on the mount(receiving 2nd set of tablets).

2.8.1. This was right after the reprieve/pardon from **golden-calf** incident.

2.8.2. A perfect example given of **Human faithlessness** & **Divine mercy**!

2.9. (9,10) **God**, infinitely wronged, not only tempers wrath but tempers justice. Though at what cost to Himself,…only the NT would reveal?

2.9.1. **Great things He has NOT done!** -- *Don't limit your praises to only what the Lord HAS done, but include what He HASN'T done!*

2.9.2. Everyman knows the **plague** of his own heart! (1 Kings 8:38)

2.9.3. **Don't even think you can cleanse yourself from sin!** -- That is like trying to climb up a steep glacier of ice in tennis shoes. - Like pouring water into a baggy with holes. – It is like trying to building up a wall of loose sand.

2.9.4. **Q: On what basis did He deal w/us?** - On the basis of the **cross**, the **grace** of God!

2.10. (11,12) However many miles are between east & West, you can’t look 2 ways at once!

2.10.1. You have to **turn your back on** 1 in order to look in the direction of the other!

2.10.2. When God forgives, He puts **our sin** & **us** on **2 different horizons**.

2.10.3. When He looks at **our sin** he is no longer looking at **us**; & when he looks at **us**, he is no longer looking at **our sin**! (Boice)

2.10.4. I read a story of a much-loved priest in the Philippines, who carried the **burden** of a **secret sin** he had committed many years before. He had repented but still had no peace, no sense of God's forgiveness. In his parish was a **woman** who deeply loved God and who claimed to have visions in which she spoke with Christ and he with her. The priest, however, was skeptical. To **test her** he said, "The next time you speak with Christ, I want you to ask him what sin your priest committed while he was in seminary." The woman agreed. A few days later the priest asked, "Well, did Christ visit you in your dreams?" - "Yes, he did," she replied. - "And did you ask him what sin I committed in seminary?" - "Yes." - "Well, what did he say?" - "He said, 'I don't remember.'"

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2 Derik Kidner; pg.366
2.11. (13,14) If immeasurable distances are one way of expressing immeasurable love & mercy; then intimacy of a family is another!

2.11.1. When we speak of Gods mercy it is like that of a father for his children!

2.11.2. For those who have been redeemed…He is our Father!

2.12. (15-18) Observe the contrast between us & God.

2.12.1. This is the most beautiful time of year in our valley. Q: Have you seen the wild flowers along our freeway & the grass on the hills?

2.12.1.1. Yet, unfortunately they don’t last but a 2/3 months.

2.12.1.2. Man, like Grass & wild-flowers, are so brief in their glory, in contrast to God’s “never ending” (from everlasting to everlasting) mercy & rt.

2.13. PRAISE FOR…ALL CREATION! (19-22)

2.14. (19) His kingdom rules over all - God’s realm is the totality of all things!

2.14.1. No matter how difficult your day; or how discouraging your news; lean on the wonderful assurance that God is on His throne!

2.14.2. And, if He rules over all things, “is it safe to complain about anything, even a windy day or rainy weather?”

2.14.2.1. It’s loving Him & trusting Him in the storm & in the sunshine!

2.15. (20-22) Mighty Angels, Serving Hosts (heavenly army), & His wonderful Works.

2.15.1. David like a wonderful conductor of an orchestra, has now brought in every part:

2.15.1.1. He 1st brings in the String section of Angels; next the Brass section of Hosts; then the Works of the Woodwinds.

2.15.1.2. He draws out notes of praise! {What a scene!!!}

2.15.2. David also, like a wonderful Choir director…sing’s no solo!

2.15.2.1. All in heaven & on earth are called upon to bless the Lord with him.

2.15.2.2. His voice, like every other, has its own part to add. - It’s own benefits; its own things to celebrate; its own access to the attentive ear of God!
2.16. **Believers: Q:** Is there real praise in your heart to God?

2.16.1. **Ask yourselves: Q:** Do you come to church out of habit, to impress, or to appease someone? – Do you ever hear sermons w/o really listening to God? – Did you find yourself today “singing the songs”, but not truly worshipping Him?

2.16.2. **If so we need to, like David, talk to ourselves!**

2.16.3. **We** need to stir up our hearts to a more appropriate emotional response to the truth about the God we know!

2.16.3.1. Jonathon Edwards said, “There is no true worship that does not touch the affections.”

2.16.4. **If you find your heart cold…do what David did…count your blessings!**

2.16.5. **Become aware** of your blessings & begin to praise God for them.

2.17. **Unbelievers: Q:** Are these blessings David names in this chapter for everyone? No! (vs. 17) let’s us know they are only for those who “fear Him”. And in vs.18 “To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.”

2.17.1. **Ask yourselves: Q:** Have you experienced forgiveness of sins?

Has God redeemed your life from destruction?

Has God satisfied you w/good things?

Have you experienced for yourself that “The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and-abounding in mercy”?

2.17.2. **Surrender to Jesus Christ today!** – Join in the great choir of those who have been saved & sing blessings unto His Wonderful Name…How about today?

2.18. **End** - “To save such a sinner as I am!...He shall never hear the end of it!”

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3 Adapted from Roy Clements; Boice; pg.837

4 ibid