

Psalm 103

by Henry Law

Psalm 103 is a hymn of praise and comfort that highlights God's forgiveness, healing, redemption, and loving-kindness, and calls us to respond with praise and worship.

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Divine Redemption"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the hymn that shines with surpassing luster, bringing comfort to the Church and to our hearts. Praise is a heavenly plant that should be cultivated with fervor, acknowledging and adoring God's abundant benefits. The hymn beautifully describes God's forgiveness, healing, redemption, loving-kindness, and provision, emphasizing Jesus as the ultimate remedy for all maladies. It also highlights God's righteousness, mercy, grace, and everlasting love towards those who fear Him, portraying His sovereignty over all creation.

Transcript

As in the firmament one star differs from another star in glory, so this hymn shines with surpassing luster. Through a long course of years it has been especial comfort to the Church. May it be especial comfort to our hearts!

1-2. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all His benefits."

Praise is a plant of heavenly growth. It is the saint's choice garden of delights. Drowsy souls should be stirred up, and every faculty quickened to expend its language. Heaven is opened wide to pour down benefits. Every benefit should be received with adoration. Abundant crops of praise should spring from this abundant seed.

3-5. "Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases. Who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

A throng of mercies crowd upon our view. Each presents large themes of praise. Who can bless God enough that He is ever ready to pardon--that He has provided a fountain in His dear Son's blood to wash out every iniquity. It is a soul-transporting truth that those who hide in the Savior's wounds are screened forever from His wrath. But the believer, though heir of forgiveness, is ever prone to fall into unhealthy

malady. It is a true description, The whole head is sick--and the whole heart faint--from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is nothing in us but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. Can these diseases be all healed? Jesus is full remedy. He gives health and a cure. He is Jehovah-Rophi. To Him, also, we may bring every malady of our sickly frames. During His earthly ministry diseases fled before Him. As many as touched Him were made perfectly whole. What an encouragement to bring all sickness to Him! He is Jesus still. Who can give thanks enough for redemption's wonders! It rescues us from destruction's grasp. It cries, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. Lovingkindness, also, and tender mercies exalt the believer to grand eminence. A crown is set upon his head, sparkling with glory. Rich supplies too of sustenance are abundantly provided. All things necessary to cheer and to invigorate enrich his board. Thus, though at times he may appear to droop, he revives, as an eagle, rising from its languishing to the freshness and vigor of its youth.

6-7. "The Lord executes righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel."

He especially befriends His children, when oppressed by cruel foes. He stretches forth His hand to vindicate their cause. In His dealings with Moses and the children of Israel, He draws a chart in which His watchful guidance may be ever traced.

8-10. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plentiful in mercy. He will not always chide; neither will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

The Lord's tender dealings are here portrayed. It is Scripture's frequent testimony that He is rich in mercy, and that His mercy endures forever. Mercy looks upon our misery and flies to give alleviation. Grace, also, is its close comrade. It compassionates demerits. It brings the robe of Christ's righteousness to cover our unworthiness. We are quick to sin. But our God is long-suffering. He pauses and restrains due vengeance. The plenitude of His goodness outweighs the plenitude of our guilt. When He chides it is His strange work. The scourge is soon checked, and smiles of love dispel the frowns of wrath. Who can regard our mountains of mountains of iniquity, and not confess, We are undone. If God should dispense strict justice to our sins, we perish. But in Christ Jesus free grace triumphs.

11-12. "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

Infinite is borrowed to exemplify God's mercy. Immeasurable distance parts the heaven from earth, so God's mercy exceeds all bounds. Thought cannot conceive it. Words cannot express it. Ransomed souls are its main recipients. They are aptly described as filled with the reverential grace of fear. Infinite space again expresses the removal of our sins. No traversing steps can join the east to west. As we advance from the one the other constantly recedes. Let us bless the Holy Spirit for employing this image to teach how utterly the guilt of sin is cancelled.

13-14. "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust."

Sweet is the picture of paternal love. Compassion melts a father's breast. He speaks and acts in constant tenderness. But what is earthly feeling compared to the benevolence of a heavenly Father's heart! He knows, also, our every infirmity. By fellow-feeling Jesus sympathizes with weak humanity.

15-18. "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them."

This picture shows the frailty and instability of man. Enduring strength is not his property. Behold the grass of the meadow! The Word cries, "All flesh is grass." For a little moment it is green and vigorous. But in a speck of time it is dried up and withered. Behold, also, the flower of the field! It presents a lovely form. But evanescent is its beauty! A biting wind arises. Its bright hues all fade. It disappears and leaves no trace. Its place is vacant. We may search, but it is gone. View now in contrast the mercy of our God! It is from everlasting to everlasting. It endures forever. No age can change its loveliness, or dim its beautiful smiles. So, also, His righteousness beams from generation to generation. Covenant love blesses His faithful people, whose delight is to be steadfast in His ways, and in whose thoughts His commandments have perpetual sway.

19. "The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all."

Faith is invigorated by contemplating the sovereignty of God. In heaven He sits as King. His rule is unbounded over all the inhabitants of earth. What thought can be more cheering! What truth can give more solid support! How safe are they who shelter beneath His wings. They are kept as the very apple of His eye. Who can harm them? His sheep shall never perish, for who can pluck them out of His hands?

20-22. "Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all His hosts; you ministers of His, who do His pleasure. Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion; bless the Lord, O my soul."

Let universal praise pervade all heaven and earth. Let all the angelic hosts, whose life is uninterrupted service, shout aloud. Marvelous powers are their inheritance. Let all be consecrated to one work. Theirs is the joy of hearkening to His voice. Let theirs be the joy of rendering blessing. Let all creation swell the strain. Throughout His realm let silence be unknown. O my soul, let noblest rapture emanate from you. Let loudest notes attest your love.

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