

# (How to Understand the KJV Bible) 05 Psalm 103

by Keith Simons

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*This sermon explores the themes of God's forgiveness, healing, redemption, mercy, and justice, and encourages listeners to fear and obey God.*

**Duration:** 24:30

**Scripture:** Psalm 103:1

**Topics:** "KJV Bible", "God's Mercy", "Worship"

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## Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 103, emphasizing the importance of heartfelt worship and gratitude towards God. He explains that David calls upon his soul to bless the Lord, recognizing the depth of God's forgiveness, healing, and mercy. Simons highlights that God's love and kindness are abundant, extending from generation to generation for those who fear Him. He encourages believers to remember God's benefits and to live in a way that honors Him, as God's mercy is everlasting. The sermon concludes with a call for all creation to bless the Lord, starting from the individual soul.

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## Transcript

Welcome to our talks on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible. My name is Keith Symons and I'm a Bible teacher from England. Today we're looking at Psalm 103 and as usual we'll be going through verse by verse and word by word looking at what each of the words means and what the passage as a whole means.

So Psalm 103 verse 1, To bless means to kneel down literally, to give honour to God, to praise him, to worship him. So the author of the psalm who is David says bless the Lord O my soul. That O means that he's addressing or calling upon his soul.

In other words, he's calling on the life in him, his inner life to bless the Lord. And this first part of the psalm is all addressed to my soul. In other words, David is speaking to his soul within him.

He's speaking to his inner life. He's saying he doesn't want his praise to God just be words that his mouth speaks and that his heart isn't merely in. He wants from deep within him to praise God and to give honour to God.

So he's not satisfied just with words that mean nothing. He wants real praise to God, real praise from all that is within him, from his inner life. And then he repeats that, verse 2, The Hebrew word for benefits there doesn't mean literally good things.

It could mean bad things. But the list which David gives clearly means good things. So David is saying forget not all the good things that God has done for you.

Don't forget the wonderful things that God has done for you. So now we have a list starting in verse 3 of the good things that God has done for David. The first of them is God forgives who forgiveth all thine iniquities.

God forgave his sins. When David wandered away from God, when he had his adulterous affair with Bathsheba, when he ordered the death of her husband, he turned back to God and God forgave him those evil deeds. And so David is saying to his soul, his inner person, his real self, give honour to God, give praise to God.

Look at what he's done for you. He's forgiven you those wrong things. You deserved only his punishment.

You deserved only hell. But God forgave you. And then he moves on, who healeth all thy diseases.

So God has not only forgiven David's sins, he's also healed his illnesses. Some people take this, I think, a bit too literally and say all thy diseases, all the soul's diseases. Well that's true.

God heals the distress of our mind. God heals the troubles which are disturbing us. But God also heals the distress of our bodies and that troubles the soul, the inner person as well.

And all these benefits you've received from God, you know, whenever you've recovered, you might say, well, it's the doctor's medicine that cured me. Well, be sure that if the doctor's medicine worked, it worked because God healed your illness. And God is a God who forgives.

God is a God who heals. God is a God, verse 4, who redeemeth thy life from destruction. When you looked like you were going to die and to go to hell, it's God who paid the price.

That's what redeem means. He paid the price so that you could be free from destruction. And when we think about Jesus on the cross, he took the punishment for our sins, he redeemed us, he paid the price to save us who deserved death and hell for our sins and for our evil deeds and to give us a right relationship with God.

If we will only turn to him with the repentance that he gives us and put our trust in him. Who crowneth thee? That's like putting a crown on a king's head and the crown goes around his head. And the Hebrew word there means that things he's about to describe go around you.

And what is it that goes around you? Well, it's God's loving kindness and his tender mercies. This psalm is all about God's great love for his people, how much God cares for his people, how he protects them and looks after them and provides for them abundantly beyond anything they could ever ask or think or expect or desire. God's goodness is great, his love is great.

Verse five, who satisfies thy mouth with good things so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles. This is a difficult verse to translate. There are specific problems with the words which are translated in the King James Bible, thy mouth.

In modern Bible translations you'll see your desire, but that's too is a weak translation of the Hebrew. The Hebrew word seems to mean trappings like the beautiful ornaments decorate a horse, a beautiful horse. And so it's describing that, but how does that convey into English and into the picture we have? Well, what seems to be the picture is that the soul of the person was in great trouble and God rescued it.

The person was dying and God brought them life. God satisfied that person with good things. And that seems to be the sense in which this passage is.

It's not meaning God just gave you food to eat, satisfies thy mouth with good things. It means God took you when you were dying, when you were desperate, when you were in great trouble and in great danger and he took you and he didn't just rescue you, he satisfied you. He gave you every good thing that you needed so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles, he continues.

Well, once a year the eagle, the bird, molts and it loses all its feathers and it looks like it's dying. And then new feathers grow so that its youth is renewed and it looks like a young, strong, healthy eagle again. And it flies with great strength and power across the skies and remains in the sky for long, long periods of time.

And as for you, well you were far from God, you were in a desperate situation, you were guilty because of all your sins and your wrongdoing and it looked like the only thing you were heading for was death and hell after it. But God took you, he forgave your sins, he healed your diseases, he redeemed you from destruction, he surrounded you with his loving kindness and his tender mercies and so you have a new life with him. It's as if you're born again.

Verse 6, the Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. So he sees his people who are suffering like God's people were suffering in Egypt and he acts, that's what executeth means, he acted. He acted to do what was right and to bring them justice, to bring them freedom.

And we've got now a specific reference in verse 7 to Moses. God made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. Children of is a Hebrew way of speaking, it doesn't mean children as in young people, it means the people of, the nation of.

The people of Israel saw God's acts, God rescued them, he took them out of Egypt, he took them through the Red Sea on dry land. But Moses, God's special friend, well Moses saw more than God's acts, more than the things that God did, because God revealed his mind to Moses, as his friend he talked with him. God made known his ways unto Moses, he taught Moses what God's ways are.

And so we see the great kindness of God, verse 8, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. Although Israel's people in the desert turned away from him so many times, yet God was merciful to them, yet God brought their children into the land which he had promised them. God revealed himself as being slow to anger, yes he was angry against their evil deeds, but he much preferred to forgive their evil deeds, he much preferred to restore their relationship with him, he much preferred to show them his love and his mercy and his kindness, that's what gracious means, kindness.

He will not always chide, he won't always rebuke his people, tell them off, condemn them for their sins, if he did that they're all guilty, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and they would have no rescue from their sins. No, God desires to forgive, neither will he keep his anger forever. God, if his anger remained against our sins, there'd be no quenching of that anger, no forgiving, no cleansing of sin, but God desires to forgive, because that is his character, that is his perfect mercy, and that is why in verse 10,

he had not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Sins and iniquities means much the same thing, the wrong things we do, the evil things that we do, that deserve their proper punishment, but when we turn to him, he doesn't deal with us in that way. Why is that? Why does God not punish us as we deserve for our sins when we turn to him and repent of those sins? Why does he allow us to repent of them? Why did he provide Jesus to die on the cross and to suffer our punishment? We wouldn't have done that for someone who defended us so deeply, but God did it. But you see, God is not like us.

Verse 11, for as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. And we think of our earth, and we think of its ways and the way people behave, and then we think of the ways that God behaves, so much better, so much more wonderful, so kind. How high is the heaven above the earth? We know how high the clouds are, we even know how high the sun and the moon and the stars are, but how high is the heaven above the earth? Endless.

And so God's love, so God's kindness is endless towards those that fear him. The only requirement is that they fear him. That means that they respect him, that they obey him, that they seek to do what he wants, that when God directs them to turn from their sins, they do so.

When God directs them to trust in him, they do so. But what about their wrongdoings? They're guilty of so many evil things. Is not God offended by those evil things? Of course he is.

That's why he acted to forgive them. That's why as far, verse 12, as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Okay, in those days, they weren't really aware that the world was round if they knew it at all.

They looked one way and that was east. They looked the other way and that was west, and they were in the opposite direction. And what it's saying is, that's how far God takes our sins away from us.

Yes, God is angry with our sins, but he can distinguish us from our sins. He can save us from our sins. He can put our sins far from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. That's those that respect him. God pities.

What does this word pity mean? It means show love, tender love, compassion. A father, when he looks after his children, they might do many wrong things, but that father has compassion on them. He doesn't want to punish them, not even as they deserve.

He wants to forgive them. He wants to restore them to a right relationship with them. Why? Because that father truly loves them.

That father truly cares about them, even though they've disobeyed him, even though they've done so many wrong things. At least that's what a father's attitude should be, or rather that's how God's attitudes are towards the people who fear him, who respect him. Because they respect him, he shows them this great love and this great kindness.

For he knoweth, verse 14, he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. He knows how we're put together. The book of Genesis describes the creation of man, that God created man from the dust of

the earth and then he breathed into him to give him his life, his soul.

And, you know, when we've fallen into sin, when we've fallen away from God, that life in us becomes very weak. Our soul becomes very weak and we destroy our relationship with God. We become like mere dust because it's all that's left when the soul or the spirit is taken from a man.

But God remembers our weakness. We have no excuse for our sins, our evil deeds, but God remembers our weakness and he cares about us. As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

Flourish means grows well. Grass grows quickly when the weather is right. A flower can grow very beautiful when all is going well for it, but it's just a moment of time that the hot wind passes over it, verse 16, then it's gone.

The place thereof shall know it no more. In other words, it's just bare ground there, where once there was this beautiful flourishing life of the grass or the plant growing so well. Now there's nothing.

And that's how death is to a person who's far from God. No, I'm not saying their spirit disappears. I'm saying that the life which we see on earth disappears.

And God's judgment is against that person's spirit when that person's spirit comes before God. But what about those that fear him? Do they suffer the same thing, those who truly respect God? No, because verse 17, the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. It lasts forever.

The great mercy, the great kindness of God and his righteousness unto children's children. So God's goodness is not just for those who respect him. It can continue for future generations of their family to the children and the grandchildren and great-grandchildren after them if they, verse 18, to such as keep his command, sorry, to such as keep his covenant to those who obey the instructions God's given, to those who remember the covenant, means the relationship that God has with his people.

And that relationship with Ismael's people especially emphasised what God has commanded. Those that remember his commandments, but not just in their minds, not just a memory exercise. They remember God's commandments and they do them.

And how does God show this mercy? How can God do these great things? Well, the Lord, verse 19, has prepared his throne in the heavens and his kingdom ruleth over all. Yes, God can show his mercy to the people who respect him because he rules from heaven above and he rules all things. So to conclude the psalm, the author calls on all things to bless the Lord as he did at the beginning.

So he starts with the angels, bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, so strong, so mighty, so powerful, doing what God orders, obeying what his word says that they should do. And then he turns, verse 21, bless the Lord, all ye his hosts. Hosts means armies, all you his armies.

Who are they? Well, they're the people of God on earth. The word hosts could mean the angels in heaven, but we've already mentioned them. So I think this is God's people on earth.

Ye ministers, that's the servants of him, not just the people called ministers, the servants of God that do his pleasure, that please him. And then everyone and everything should bless the Lord. So he concludes, bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion.

Everything that he has created should bless and give honour to God. And so he concludes, there's one more thing, small and weak as it is, that should give honour to God. And it's where we began, it's my own soul, my own life in me.

Bless the Lord, he says, O my soul. Well, I'm going to read through the psalm in full in a moment. Let me give you my email address, because I would love to hear that you've heard this talk, 333 KJV at gmail.com. Here's the whole psalm.

The psalm of David. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles. The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that 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. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the Lord, all ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

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