

# The King of History

Ps 105:1 Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!

<sup>2</sup> Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!

<sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

<sup>4</sup> Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!

<sup>5</sup> Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

<sup>6</sup> O offspring of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

<sup>7</sup> He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

<sup>8</sup> He remembers his covenant forever, the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

<sup>9</sup> the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac,

<sup>10</sup> which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

<sup>11</sup> saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."

<sup>12</sup> When they were few in number, of little account, and sojourners in it,

<sup>13</sup> wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people,

<sup>14</sup> he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account,

<sup>15</sup> saying, "Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!"

<sup>16</sup> When he summoned a famine on the land and broke all supply of bread,

<sup>17</sup> he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

<sup>18</sup> His feet were hurt with fetters; his neck was put in a collar of iron;

<sup>19</sup> until what he had said came to pass, the word of the LORD tested him.

<sup>20</sup> The king sent and released him; the ruler of the peoples set him free;

<sup>21</sup> he made him lord of his house and ruler of all his possessions,

<sup>22</sup> to bind his princes at his pleasure and to teach his elders wisdom.

<sup>23</sup> Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

<sup>24</sup> And the LORD made his people very fruitful and made them stronger than their foes.

<sup>25</sup> He turned their hearts to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants.

<sup>26</sup> He sent Moses, his servant, and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

<sup>27</sup> They performed his signs among them and miracles in the land of Ham.

<sup>28</sup> He sent darkness, and made the land dark; they did not rebel against his words.

<sup>29</sup> He turned their waters into blood and caused their fish to die.

<sup>30</sup> Their land swarmed with frogs, even in the chambers of their kings.

<sup>31</sup> He spoke, and there came swarms of flies, and gnats throughout their country.

<sup>32</sup> He gave them hail for rain, and fiery lightning bolts through their land.

<sup>33</sup> He struck down their vines and fig trees, and shattered the trees of their country.

<sup>34</sup> He spoke, and the locusts came, young locusts without number,

<sup>35</sup> which devoured all the vegetation in their land and ate up the fruit of their ground.

<sup>36</sup> He struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of all their strength.

<sup>37</sup> Then he brought out Israel with silver and gold, and there was none among his tribes who stumbled.

<sup>38</sup> Egypt was glad when they departed, for dread of them had fallen upon it.

<sup>39</sup> He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light by night.

<sup>40</sup> They asked, and he brought quail, and gave them bread from heaven in abundance.

<sup>41</sup> He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed through the desert like a river.

<sup>42</sup> For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham, his servant.

<sup>43</sup> So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing.

<sup>44</sup> And he gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the fruit of the peoples' toil,

<sup>45</sup> that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws. Praise the LORD!

**Ps 106:1** Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

<sup>2</sup> Who can utter the mighty deeds of the LORD, or declare all his praise?

<sup>3</sup> Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times!

<sup>4</sup> Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you save them,

<sup>5</sup> that I may look upon the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory with your inheritance.

<sup>6</sup> Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness.

<sup>7</sup> Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.

<sup>8</sup> Yet he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.

<sup>9</sup> He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, and he led them through the deep as through a desert.

<sup>10</sup> So he saved them from the hand of the foe and redeemed them from the power of the enemy.

<sup>11</sup> And the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left.

<sup>12</sup> Then they believed his words; they sang his praise.  
<sup>13</sup> But they soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel.  
<sup>14</sup> But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness, and put God to the test in the desert;  
<sup>15</sup> he gave them what they asked, but sent a wasting disease among them.  
<sup>16</sup> When men in the camp were jealous of Moses and Aaron, the holy one of the LORD,  
<sup>17</sup> the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.  
<sup>18</sup> Fire also broke out in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.  
<sup>19</sup> They made a calf in Horeb and worshiped a metal image.  
<sup>20</sup> They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass.  
<sup>21</sup> They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt,  
<sup>22</sup> wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.  
<sup>23</sup> Therefore he said he would destroy them-- had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them.  
<sup>24</sup> Then they despised the pleasant land, having no faith in his promise.  
<sup>25</sup> They murmured in their tents, and did not obey the voice of the LORD.  
<sup>26</sup> Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them that he would make them fall in the wilderness,  
<sup>27</sup> and would make their offspring fall among the nations, scattering them among the lands.  
<sup>28</sup> Then they yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;  
<sup>29</sup> they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them.  
<sup>30</sup> Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stayed.  
<sup>31</sup> And that was counted to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever.

<sup>32</sup> They angered him at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with  
Moses on their account,  
<sup>33</sup> for they made his spirit bitter, and he spoke rashly with his lips.  
<sup>34</sup> They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD commanded them,  
<sup>35</sup> but they mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did.  
<sup>36</sup> They served their idols, which became a snare to them.  
<sup>37</sup> They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons;  
<sup>38</sup> they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and  
daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land  
was polluted with blood.  
<sup>39</sup> Thus they became unclean by their acts, and played the whore in  
their deeds.  
<sup>40</sup> Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people, and he  
abhorred his heritage;  
<sup>41</sup> he gave them into the hand of the nations, so that those who hated  
them ruled over them.  
<sup>42</sup> Their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought into  
subjection under their power.  
<sup>43</sup> Many times he delivered them, but they were rebellious in their  
purposes and were brought low through their iniquity.  
<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, he looked upon their distress, when he heard their  
cry.  
<sup>45</sup> For their sake he remembered his covenant, and relented according  
to the abundance of his steadfast love.  
<sup>46</sup> He caused them to be pitied by all those who held them captive.  
<sup>47</sup> Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the nations,  
that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise.  
<sup>48</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to  
everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the LORD!"

## **PSALM 105-106**

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# What is History?

WHAT IS HISTORY? I went looking for answers this week on Google and, as this search-engine's name signifies, there are about that many different opinions out there. I remember being taught over and over in *History* classes at every level of my education that Western Civilization views history as “linear,” while the East views history as “cyclical.” Usually, this tied in with the belief that the West sees history as having been created and having a beginning, while the East often views it eternal with no end and basically directionless. A blogger captures this view well:

The cyclic view of history is defined by the fact that no matter what, history will repeat itself just as the seasons repeat themselves. History also has no meaning or goal it just “is”. The linear view of history consists of notions of fate. That there is a plan for everyone and each individual plan is propelled toward the “end”. The linear point of view is most often revolved around religion and people that chose this view often adopted “God’s view”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Mindy Myers**, “Cyclic view Vs. Linear View,” *Just Mindy* (May 1, 2011), <http://justsimplymindy.blogspot.com/2011/05/cyclic-view-vs-linear-view.html>, last accessed Jan 16, 2018.

I'm not really sure this does full justice to the complexity that is "history" in either view. Certainly, the *biblical* view of history is that God ordains its end from its beginning and that it has purpose to it (cf. **Isa 46:10**). But history, at least biblical history, is supposed to be **much more personal** than this. It does not see history as "this set of facts that happened to someone, somewhere." It's much rather like learning some incredible story of birth and survival about your great grandmother. If it wasn't for that story, *I* wouldn't be here! Nevertheless, it is history and this single fact is what sets Christianity apart from all other religions.

This is in contrast to someone like **Francesca Stavrakopoulou**, Head of the Department of Theology and Religion and the University of Exeter and professor Hebrew Bible and Ancient Religion. She was interviewed recently on ABC's *The Weekly* with Charles Pickering.<sup>2</sup> On a segment that begins with the question, "**Is the Bible still relevant today?**" she replies, "**We cannot possibly understand western culture without the Bible.**" The host then says, "**She's devoted her life to discovering the historical evidence to one of the world's most important**

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<sup>2</sup> **Francesca Stavrakopoulou**, ABC's *The Weekly* with Charles Pickering (April 27, 2016), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xVBldyy\\_Oo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xVBldyy_Oo)

books,” and therefore asks, “I want to find out about the Bible. So, who wrote it and when?” Her reply? “Some people think Moses wrote it. But he didn’t, because he didn’t exist ... it was all written by men with daddy issues.” “Jonah was never swallowed by a big fish. The Exodus never happened.” (You need no longer wonder why ABC had her on TV).

My point isn’t to defend the truth against such nonsense here.<sup>3</sup> Rather, it is say that this self-avowed “Bible-lover” and “atheist” doesn’t understand the most basic point of the Bible. **If it isn’t real history, the Bible is worthless.** As the Apostle puts it, “**If Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain**” (1Co 15:17). For its chief claim is that this history has direct bearing upon my life. “**If Christ has not been raised ... you are still in your sins**” (same verse). This isn’t **Aesop’s Fables**, nor does it make such a claim. Instead, its claim is that these things happened and because they happened, I better pay attention.

In the long history of the Bible, no one until the advent of Rationalism really ever doubted the historical claims of

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<sup>3</sup> A good, short response can be found at **Tess Holgate**, “‘The Bible Was written by men with Daddy issues,’ says atheist scholar: John Dickson responds [to Francesca Stavrakopoulou],” *Eternity* (May 2, 2016), <https://www.eternitynews.com.au/opinion/the-bible-was-written-by-men-with-daddy-issues-says-atheist-scholar/>

the Bible. The hardly conservative Jewish scholar Jon Levinson writes, “The present generation makes history their story, *but it is first history*. They do not determine who they are by looking within, by plumbing the depths of the individual soul, by seeking a mystical light in the innermost reaches of the self. Rather, the direction is the opposite. What is public is made private” (emphasis mine).<sup>4</sup>

This history is not just there for amusement or some moral lesson. Michael Horton explains its purpose:

It is [as Levenson points out] in telling and retelling this story of creation and exodus that Israel receives its identity and passes it down from generation to generation. “In the words of the rabbinic Passover liturgy (Haggadah), ‘*Each man is obliged to see himself as if he came out of Egypt.*’” ... Biblical “remembering” is identifying one’s own life story with the history of God’s covenant with his people. Unlike the religions of the world, Israel derives meaning ‘not from introspection, but from a consideration of the public testimony to God.’”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1985), 39.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 86.

History is not only rendered contemporary; it is internalized. One's people's history becomes one's personal history. One looks out from the self to find out who one is meant to be. One does not discover one's identity, and one certainly does not forge it oneself. He appropriates an identity that is a matter of public knowledge. Israel affirms the given. The given that is affirmed in the covenant ceremony is not a principle; it is not an idea or an aphorism [cliché] or an ideal. Instead, it is the consequence of what are presented as the acts of God ... Israel began to infer and to affirm her identity by telling a story.<sup>6</sup>

Horton concludes, “Genuine knowing—covenantal knowing—occurs not by looking away from history toward interior contemplation but by internalizing that very history so that it is part of one's own body and experience.”<sup>7</sup>

This is the point of our Psalms today. To learn to internalize the entire history of Israel as my story. Not that I pretend that I was there. But rather, as that [great grandmother](#) again. It is my story because these are my spiritual ancestors. If their history never happened, I might as well throw the entire book out the window. I cannot be saved.

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<sup>6</sup> Levenson, in Horton, 86-87.

<sup>7</sup> Horton, 87.

## Psalms 105-106: Context and Relationships

*A little context.* What our psalms teach is the **climactic element of Book IV** of the Psalter. Psalms 105 and 106 are the last two songs of this mini-collection. Book IV is all about the biblical response to the true felt need that it often seems as if God's eternal covenant promises to David are in fact quite temporary and God has given up on his people. The response is, **"No. I haven't given up on the Davidic covenant. But, in fact, dear people, I have been your King since long before David was born."** These final two songs bring this thought to a stunning conclusion.

Psalms 105 and 106 are what some have called **twin-psalms**, much like 103 and 104. As with the end of Psalm 103 which sings, **"Bless the LORD, all his works"** (103:22) and Psalm 104 which immediately begins to declare what those works are (see 104:24), so also 105's **very last word is hallelujah** (105:45; **"praise the LORD"**), while **the very first word** (and last word) of 106:1 is the same thing. Connecting them all together, 104 (**vs. 35**) also ends on hallelujah, making these last three songs of Book IV the first in the entire Psalter to use this word. Further, the 103-104 pair connects to the 105-106 pair with the word **"meditation,"**

which is curiously also about God's "works." "May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD" (104:34). "Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! Sing to Him – sing praise to Him, Meditate on all His wonders/works" (105:2 YLT).

What are those works? Ps 104 just finished talking about God as **Omnipotent Creator**. His works are **the works of creation**. It surveyed various biblical creation stories to create its own masterpiece, a creation story of intensely personal value. For in its teaching, it shows God's people that he created everything that exists *for them*.

In an important way, Psalm 105 continues to talk about the LORD's **creative power**. But now, the emphasis is not on the creation of the cosmos, but on **the creation of his chosen people**. Bringing new people into existence is the work of God. In Psalm 104, Yahweh is omnipotent and unchallenged. In 105, he is still omnipotent and unchallenged! In 104, he sustains all creation by his power, wisdom, and presence. In 105, he *saves* and sustains his chosen people by his **power** (104:2's "wondrous works"), **wisdom** (22), and **presence** (4).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Wallace, *Narrative Effect of Book IV*, 77.

This *new creation*, this creation of God's elect, is what we call redemptive history. *History!* It is organized in Psalm 105 around **two main figures** prior to David: **Abraham** and **Moses**. The previous psalm focused mostly on **Adam**, and (most likely) somewhat on **Noah** (**104:6-9**). While Israel would not exist without Adam and Noah, it is really beginning with Abraham that their rise as a nation begins. This song begins to tell their story with him.

Importantly, as we were just reminded, it is the Davidic covenant that gives rise to Book IV of the psalter (**Ps 89:39**). Psalm 105 mentions **the Abrahamic covenant** explicitly three times (**105:8, 9, 10**). Curiously, it was the two great covenantal heads prior to Abraham, who were around in the previous song. Adding to this, Psalm 106 mentions “**covenant**” again (**106:45**), this time referring to the **Mosaic covenant** (also alluding to places in the Torah where that covenant is mentioned [cf. Dt 9:9, 11, 15]).<sup>9</sup> It also directly tells the story of the last great remaining covenant of the OT—the **priestly covenant** (**Ps 106:28-31**; cf. **Num 25:12-13**). Put this all together and you have in these three songs

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<sup>9</sup> Some might think the covenant in this verse is the Abrahamic again. Wallace points out however, “**Ps 105:45 contains a reference to the laws and statutes one typically associates with the Mosaic covenant.**” Ibid.

at the end of Book IV, [a mini covenant theology](#). In one way or another, it deals with all the major covenants of the OT, yet talking about them not abstractly but, as it should be, as Israel's great redemptive covenantal *history*.

That's vital, because it is [through covenant that God enters into a relationship](#) with Israel in the first place, swearing to do things which become so very important, especially in Psalm 106, which takes the positive new creation and, like the original creation, tells the story of the great fall of Israel after it, and what this God who created these people does about such things. How does God act once they sin? What kind of a God does he show himself to be? Those questions end up finishing Psalm 106 and Book IV, even as they offer a way to introduce Book V, as we will see next time.

## **Psalms 105: New Creation: The Covenant People**

### *Thanks and Remembrance (Ps 105:1-5)*

Psalm 105, can be divided into [six stages](#). It begins (with no superscription) in a “[thanksgiving and remembrance](#)” stage. “[Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his Name;](#)

make known his deeds among the peoples!” (Ps 105:1). This verse has three ideas: thanks, Name, and works. The next four verses then tease this out.

“Thanks” comes in the form of singing. “Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!” (2). How? What should we say in our song? This is what the psalm will soon begin to teach you.

“Name” comes next. “Glory in his holy Name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!” (3). “Name” parallels “LORD.” Indeed, the Name of the LORD is the LORD—the Son of God. At the Jerusalem council in Acts we read, “We believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 15:11). Then, quoting a similar passage in Amos it says, “After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my *name*” (16-17). Seeking the Name. What is their name? Christian (Acts 11:26).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> I discovered a new, independent source this week from my usual reading on that subject that talks about the Name like this in, of all places, a dissertation on divine simplicity. See Jordan P. Barrett, *Divine Simplicity: A Biblical and Trinitarian Account*, Dissertation for Doctor of Philosophy at Wheaton College (March 2016), 188-213, esp. 205-209.

“Seeking” is the theme of **Psalm 105:3**. “Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence (face) continually!” (4). Again, this is about Christ—the Face. It says people seek him. Yet, **Romans 3:11** (citing a different psalm—**14:2-3**) says “no one seeks God.” How can you understand this? Well, that’s the rest of our song.

Thus, the “works” of God return. “Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgment he uttered...” (**Ps 105:5**). You see, it is God’s wonders, works, miracles, and judgments that will now be recounted that are the thing that brings people into a relationship with him via covenant. Put another way, **he sought them** (cf. **John 15:16**). Therefore, because of what God has done for them and to them, they seek him.

### *The Covenant with the Patriarchs (Ps 105:6-16)*

The song begins to unfold these works—this history—chronologically. Its **second stage** begins with God giving birth to his new creation. “O offspring of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones!” (6). Offspring (“seed”) is **parallel** to children, Abraham is **parallel** to Jacob, servant is **parallel** to chosen ones. Because God has chosen

these people, they will now serve him. Because he gave birth to them, they are now able to seek because they are alive!

But how did God do this? He became “our God” and brought judgments through all the earth (7). The specific judgment in mind is not bad, but good. “He remembers his covenant forever” (8). This covenant is called his “word that he commanded for a thousand generations” (8). It is a covenant or “swearing a promise” or a “statue” that he made with Abraham and Isaac (9) and Jacob/Israel<sup>11</sup> (10). Same covenant renewed. It is a covenant that will last forever.

Covenants have promises, so what are these? The main promise is the land of Canaan (11), which becomes their “portion for an inheritance.” This is an allusion to Deut 32:7-9’s “sons of God” receiving the nations as their inheritance at Babel vs. “Yahweh” receiving Israel as his portion.<sup>12</sup> All the peoples that belong to the *elohim* have their land; Israel must be no different. The Canaanites forfeited their right to the land through their wickedness (Gen 15:16). So, Yahweh (the Son) takes it as his own and gives it to his people.

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<sup>11</sup> I take “Israel” here as referring to the man Jacob rather than to the whole nation of people. The reason is not because this is not the nation’s covenant, but because he is talking about individuals throughout this section. Israel is Jacob’s “new” name.

<sup>12</sup> See Svend Holm-Nielsen, “The Exodus Traditions in Psalm 105,” *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute XI* (Festschrift Gillis Gerleman; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 23.

And what kind of people were they? “Few in number, of little account, and sojourners in it” (12). They were wanderers (13). Yet, the Lord did not allow anyone to oppress them, even rebuking kings on their account (14; cf. Gen 12:17; 20:3-7). They could not touch the “messiahs” and “prophets” (15) of God (cf. Gen 20:7). This language is curious, because this is the Psalms. In the Psalms, who is the “anointed” or “messiah?” It is the king, David especially. But now, David is retreating in order to emphasize (as all of Book IV has done) what came before him.

How can this first history lesson apply today? First, as Christians, we are not promised the land of Canaan. However, the land of Canaan is a type of the world to come. This is our inheritance. Hebrews 11 links this directly back to Abraham’s promise—*a city with foundations whose builder is God* (Heb 11:8). Paul links it directly to Abraham as well saying that he received the promise of inheriting “the world” (Rom 4:13). In other words, our promise comes out of Abraham’s promise. If it didn’t happen to him, it can’t happen to us. Second, Christians are the chosen people of God of little account in this world, the spiritual seed of Abraham! His story is your story.

## *God with Joseph (Ps 105:17-22)*

The third stage of the song moves to **Joseph**. While Jacob was still living in Canaan, God sent a great famine (16). But he did so with a magnificent end in mind. Look at the language. “**He sent a man ahead ... Joseph, who was sold as a slave**” (17). Slavery is a terrible evil and Joseph suffered. The story of Genesis seems at that point to be a total fluke. “**Who would’ve thought that Joseph would save Israel, for he was a slave sent there by accident?**” But that’s the point. God thought! It was no accident. God sent him ahead of his brothers. Israel’s history is the story of God’s works and miracles, not their own.

As a slave, Joseph was eventually put into fetters and his neck in a collar of iron (18) in a dungeon. There, Joseph interpreted two dreams, but was forgotten and suffered more years for a crime he never committed (with Potiphar’s wife) “**...until what he has said came to pass.**” Until that time when he was released, the amazing phrase says, “**the Word of the LORD tested him**” (19). What could this possibly mean other than **the Logos of God** tested him (this is, in fact, the LXX word used)? And isn’t it the same today? “**Share in the suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus**” (2Ti

2:3). “For this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps” (1Pe 2:21).

As now, so also then. Through ordained suffering, God brought great redemption. The king (Pharaoh) sent and released him (20). He made Joseph lord over his house (21). Then the interesting addition, “To bring his princes at his pleasure” [giving him great power] and to teach his elders wisdom” (22). Even the pagan ruler wanted someone in charge who would rule justly. For in those days, the Pharaoh was not a terrible human being. Joseph’s story certain points forward to the day when we will judge angels living in a new heavens and new earth, ruling wisely for Christ.

But Joseph’s life also points forward to something else. As one of you reminded me this week, Joseph’s entire life is one huge typology of Jesus. Reading biblical history properly is learning how to read it with Christ at the center. Merely the single story of Joseph thrown into the pit reveals nearly a score of these foreshadowings:

#### Parallels of Joseph and Jesus (Gen 37:12-36)

Joseph	Jesus
Sent to his brothers (the sons of Israel)	Sent to the people of Israel (Matt 15:24)

Here I am	(Isaiah's servant): Here I am (Isa 52:6)
Shechem (turn back)	Sent to turn the people back to God (Ps 21:12; 25:15)
Joseph wandering	Jesus: No place to lay his head (Matt 8:20)
Dothan ("desertion")	"Come to me ... I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).
Brothers rage to kill Joseph	Pharisees rage to kill Christ (Starting in Luke 4:29)
Angry at his authority: We will see what becomes of his dreams	(mocking the king): Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him (Matt 27:42)
Reuben and Judah, their hands are clean?	Pilate: My hands are clean? (Matt 27:24)
Strip him of his robe	Jesus stripped of his robe (Matt 27:31)
Threw him into the pit (a word for Sheol, the realm of the dead)	Jesus died
Sat down to eat = spiritually dull	"forgive them, they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34)
Caravan bearing three items: gum, balm, and myrrh	Wise men bearing three gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matt 2:11)
Reuben and Judah outwit the brothers	God outwits the world in the death of Christ (1 Cor 2:8).
Joseph sold for money	Jesus sold for money (Matt 27:3)
The boy is gone, and where shall I go?	Vexed that the body of Jesus is gone (Lk 24:3, 11; Jn 20:9)
Dipped the robe in red blood	Scarlet robe (Matt 27:28)
The great evil of the brothers	Jesus came to save sinners (Matt 9:11-12)
Drawn up out of the pit	Raised from the dead (John 21:14)
Joseph Goes down to Egypt	Joseph takes Jesus down to Egypt (Matt 2:14)

## *Down into Egypt (Ps 105:23-25)*

In the song, Joseph paves the way for **stage four**: Israel came down to Egypt. “**Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham**” (23). This short section begins by showing you the reason why God lead Joseph to such heights. It got his father to Egypt, which is where he wanted him. Then God’s providence sets in. Yahweh made his people very fruitful and they became stronger than the Egyptians (24). Then God’s sovereignty over the hearts of men sets in. “**He turned their hearts to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants**” (25).

Certainly, we see in this section the **providence and sovereignty** of God over all peoples. It is a truth replete throughout the Scriptures, yet strikingly absent from American pulpits. And what do we miss when we refuse to tell it? We miss the purposes and plans of the King of the Universe turning the course of events of history exactly the way he wants them to go. In other words, we miss the very meaning of history itself. For it is because God controls it that it has meaning at all.

## *Moses and the Exodus (Ps 105:26-36)*

In the song, this moves us to **stage five: Moses**. Why? Because Israel's history is this great saga of birth, life, protection, suffering, redemption, and new birth. Moses was sent to be the deliverer. God does not leave his people to suffer forever. Moses & Aaron are “**sent**” & “**chosen**” (26). God as Kingly Sovereign in Book IV continues.

He sent them to perform signs and miracles “**in the land of Ham**” (27). The reference to Ham is intended to remind you that they were in a very bad place, for Ham was the great enemy of God after the Flood. It then recounts the **10 Plagues of Egypt**. Because it is poetry, it does not follow the exact order or list all ten plagues. It doesn't need to; you already know the story.

Exodus 7-12	Psalm 105
	<b>Darkness (#9)</b> – To bracket the account with the final two plagues, which were climactic in nature. The 9th plague was decisive for the Egyptian people (Exod 11:3) as the 10th was for Pharaoh (Exod 12:31-32).
<b>1 – Blood</b>	<b>Blood</b>
<b>2 – Frogs</b>	<b>Frogs</b>
<b>3 – Gnats</b>	<b>Flies (#4)</b> – Reversed order either to reflect the order of Moses before Aaron as in v. 26, or for some necessity of the poetry in the psalm.
<b>4 – Flies</b>	<b>Gnats (#3)</b> – See preceding comment.
<b>5 – Livestock Disease</b>	Perhaps omitted merely to shorten the account in the psalm.
<b>6 – Boils</b>	See preceding comment.
<b>7 – Hail</b>	<b>Hail</b>
<b>8 – Locusts</b>	<b>Locusts</b>
<b>9 – Darkness</b>	See comment above.

He begins with **darkness (28)**, probably to put into your mind the evil things Egypt was doing to the people. It is possibly to show the Egyptians submission to the LORD up front, for this is when their hearts started to turn in Exodus. It is also interesting that in the song, darkness is the first thing mentioned about the plagues on Egypt, while light is the first thing mentioned about Israel in the desert (see **vs. 39**).<sup>13</sup> The song recalls the plagues of **blood** upon the river (**29**), **frogs** in the very courts of Pharaoh (**30**), **flies** (**31**), **hail and lightning** (**32-33**), and devouring **locusts** (**34-35**) that all went throughout the whole land of Egypt, destroying everything they touched. Last of all, God struck down the **firstborn** of Egypt, the best of the strength of those people (**36**). Clearly, it is the Sovereignty of the King of Israel in this section of the history that is in view. For God is sovereign over suffering and over salvation.

<sup>13</sup> This point is made by Clifford, R. J. "Style and Purpose in Psalm 105." *Biblica* 60 426 [420–27] in Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150 (Revised)*, vol. 21, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 59. Also, "...they did not rebel against his words" (Ps 105:28). This could be a reference to **the obedience of Moses and Aaron** who continued to carry out the decrees upon the Egyptians (cf. **Ex 7:20; 11:10**), or perhaps more likely, to the obedience of the Egyptians who, after this plague of darkness, obeyed the Israelites requests for silver and gold (**Ex 11:2-3**).

## *The Wilderness and the Law (Ps 105:37-45)*

The **sixth and final stage** of the song recalls Israel going into the **wilderness**. They were all, all 12 tribes, brought out with silver and gold as they plundered the Egyptians (37). Egypt was glad when they left, because the dead of the LORD had fallen upon them (38). As they entered the vast wilderness, God spread a cloud for covering and fire to give light by night (39). They wanted food, so he sent them meat and the very bread of heaven, as much as they wanted (40). They were thirsty, so he opened the rock, and water gushed out, flowing like a river in the desert (41).

In other words, all of this teaches **his kind provision** for his people. Of course, if it isn't real history, what reason do you think he will provide for you? But if it is, this becomes a source of great comfort. This King with such power is no despot. He is taking care of them with **money, shelter, guidance, food, water**. All their basic needs are met in a place that shouldn't be able to meet even a single one. Yet an uncountable host was there, and God provided for them all.

Why? The song concludes with the covenant again. **“He remembered his holy promise, and Abraham, his servant”** (42). God is true to his word. He cannot renege on a promise.

Ever. If this is real history, then it must remain true for you today. But it is more. Covenants have two parties, and God doesn't just remember himself. “So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing. And he gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the fruit of the peoples' toil” (43-44). God gave great joy to his chosen people then; he does so still today.

But there is an **ultimate purpose** in view. Actually, there are two sides of the same coin in the last verse of the song. “That they might keep his statutes and observe his laws” (45) is the first. God saves his people so that they might be honoring to him in obedience, promoting the heavenly kingdom on earth, showing the world the righteousness of the God who saved them. He saved them so that they might love and obey him. Second, this first step of obedience on this long journey is worship. So, the song ends, “**Praise the LORD!**”

## **106: The Continual Fall of the Sons of Adam and Yahweh who Saves**

Psalm 106 begins with the exact same word, thus connecting the two. “**Hallelujah (Praise the LORD)**” (Ps

**106:1**). Now, this song is also a song of history, but we need to look at it with Psalm 105 because it **does something quite different**, which results in the climactic song of Book IV. It picks up the history lesson where 105 left off. It is an extremely complicated, beautiful long poem, with strata of chiasms and word plays strewn throughout (see the end of the sermon for some examples).

How does it differ from 105? In 105, you have history told basically from the **perspective of God**. God is King. God is providential. God is sovereign. God is the provider. Etc. Psalm 106 is history told from the perspective of the people. As such, it's point of view is completely different and leads to very different applications. It must be heard together with 105 if you are to have an overarching, complete understanding of biblical history. Allen breaks the song into six parts:

1. Praise, sin, and salvation (106:1–12).
2. Sin crowned by salvation and praise (106:6–12).
3. The wages of sin and a reprieve (106:13–23)
  - a. The sin of challenging God punished (106:13–15)
  - b. The sin of repudiating God's leaders punished (106:16–18)
  - c. Punishment for the sin of the golden calf averted (106:19–23)
4. Further wages of sin and another reprieve (106:24–31)
  - a. The sin of refusing the land punished (106:24–27)

- b. Punishment for pagan worship averted (106:28–31)
- 5. Further wages of sin, and hope and prayer for salvation (106:32–47)
  - a. The sin at Meribah punished (106:32–33)
  - b. Sins in the land punished (106:34–42)
  - c. Deliverance and mitigation of punishment after sinning (106:43–46)
  - d. Prayer for salvation and promise of praise (106:47)
- 6. Doxology (106:48)<sup>14</sup>

In some ways, the song reminds me of Judges, which is actually where the history ends, as it takes us from the **Red Sea (6-12)** through the **quail episode (14-15)**, the rebellions of **Korah (16-18)** and the **Golden Calf (19-23)**, the **faithless spies (24-27)**, the **Baal and Phinehas (28-31)**, the bitter waters of **Meribah (32-33)**, and the failure to obey in the **conquest and settlement of the land (34-42)**. Judges is a continue cycle of peace, evil, punishment, slavery, and deliverance, only to start over as it spirals downward out of control like the levels of hell in Dante's *Inferno*. Psalm 106 is

<sup>14</sup> **Leslie C. Allen**, *Psalms 101–150 (Revised)*, vol. 21, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 70, 71, 72, 73, 74. As with the other endings of the smaller collection/books of the Psalter, it ends with a climactic doxology:

- **Last Vs. Book I:** Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen. (Ps 41:13)
- **Last Vs. Book II:** Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen! (Ps 72:19)
- **Last Vs. Book III:** Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and Amen. (Ps 89:52)
- **Last Vs. of Book IV:** Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, 'Amen!' Praise the LORD. (Ps 106:48)

a cycle of **sin**, **punishment**, and **reprieve** over and over again. As it focuses mostly on the events in the wilderness, its selective stories give you a sense for what kind of people it is that the LORD saved. Only when you see this dark but honest side of history, can you hope to see the ultimate purpose that we find in the climax of the song.

### *Praise the LORD (Ps 106:1-5)*

The song begins with a command to **worship the LORD**: Praise him and give thanks to him (106:1). Why? It never leaves us without reasons. “**For he is good, his steadfast love endures forever.**” You are going to need this reason firmly embedded in your mind as you read this poem!

**The wonder of God** comes next. “**Who can utter the mighty deeds of the LORD, or declare all his praise?**” (2). No one! We will see just how wonderful the deeds that are shown in this song are very soon.

**Obedience**, the way 105 ended, now comes back into view. “**Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times!**” (3). Unfortunately, as we will see, this is not the way the history of Israel goes. And this is one of the main reasons we need to see this song with 105.

This section ends with a plea for God to remember the singer of the song when he shows favor to his people, when he saves them (4). Why? So that he can look upon the prosperity of God’s “chosen ones” and rejoice in the gladness of the nation of his inheritance (5). Vital words for what we are about to descend into.

### *The Red Sea (Ps 106:6-12)*

The history unfolds with a prefatory verse, “Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness” (6). This verse shows you what I said at the beginning, how the ancient history of Israel must become your history. The Psalmist sees *himself*, his people, his day and time in what he is about to put to verse. This is not the history of strangers, but of you and I.

Nevertheless, it is still their *history*. And he begins with the Red Sea, pretty much where we left off in Psalm 105. Now it is told from the perspective of the people. “Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works” (7). Nothing like this was said in Psalms 104-105. They did not remember his covenantal love but instead, on the very first moment possible, as deliverance

was still fresh like the dew on the morning grass, they rebelled by the Red Sea. This remembers their complaining to Moses that they were fenced in and the God had brought them out to die. “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?” (Ex 14:11). Him? They’re the ones who have been crying out because of their great suffering, not Moses. He was perfectly happy in the palace of Pharaoh as a prince of Egypt. The moaning of the firstborn dead was still ringing in their ears as they had seen the works of God. This is the fickleness of the human heart in all its ugly repugnance.

Yet, God saved them. (8). He did it “for his Name’s sake,” that he could make his power known (8; cf. Ex 14:31; Rom 9:17). God rebuked the Sea and the ground became as if leading the people through a desert (9). He saved them from the foe and power of the enemy (10). The waters covered the Egyptians, no one was left (11). And the people believed his words and sang his praise (12).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Again, as with many of the sections of this song, there is a beautiful, informative chiasm here. You can see it at the end of the sermon. Meditate of it and let the parallelism of the sections impress this truth more poetically upon your heart.

## *The Quail Episode (Ps 106:14-15)*

“**But they soon forgot his works**” (13). Alas, this is the story of the entire song.<sup>16</sup> As they traveled into the wilderness, they had not gotten far from the Sea at all when they started craving food. **They put God to the test** (14). We move from Exodus 14-15 to Exodus 16 (see also **Num 11:4, 31-34**). The craving here is put more in terms of sensual indulgence than actual need. It is a wanton (synonyms are lewd, outrageous, promiscuous, shameless) craving. This was more about seeing if God would answer them than it was being hungry.

Beware what you ask for. In his abundant love and mercy, “**He gave them what they asked**” (15). He also sent wasting disease! Allen reminds us that “**A spiritual principle that the Letter to the Hebrews was to reaffirm is that the**

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<sup>6</sup> I am struck by the parallelism in this verse:

*But the soon forgot his works;  
they did not wait for his counsel.*

In such a long poem as this, it is impossible to do it justice, even if we focused only on it for a whole sermon. So just note here how the parallel lines inform the meaning of each half. Not only was he powerful to save, he was ready to teach and instruct them. But they would have none of it. They rejected the totality of who God is.

forgotten savior is liable to turn judge.”<sup>17</sup> This is not a Genie in a bottle that you rub to get three wishes.

### *Korah's Rabble (Ps 106:16-18)*

The history turns to Numbers 16 and the infamous **rebellion of the cousins** of Moses and Aaron. Men in the camp became jealous of Moses because he was called the holy one of the LORD (16), not them. But God chose him, not them. So, the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan and Abiram and all their company (17). Meanwhile, fire broke out and burned up more of the wicked (18). Putting God to the test is never a good idea.

### *The Golden Calf (Ps 106:19-23)*

Next it turns to **the Golden Calf** incident. One of the great stories of the Bible for its take on pathetic human depravity, but told in a pretty humorous way (see **Ex 32**; it is also retold in **Deut 9:8-21**, which gives language to which the song seems to be alluding). They made a calf at Horeb (Sinai) and worshiped a metal image (19). Actually, they

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<sup>17</sup> Allen, 71.

worshiped their own creation, exchanging the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass (20). The Apostle tells us that this is actually one of the fundamental sins of humanity in **Romans 1:23**, “They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.” Israel’s history is everyone’s history!

“They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt” (**Ps 106:21**), “wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea” (22). And again, how long had it been? A few weeks? Therefore, he promised to destroy them in his wrath (23). Are you seeing a pattern? Those who do not learn history are destined to repeat it. Actually, in this case, those who are wicked are destined to repeat it.

### *Faithless Spies (Ps 106:24-27)*

He now remembers the **faithless spies** (**Num 13:25-14:45**; cf. **Dt 1:21-33**). “Then they despised the pleasant land” (24). “Then,” means that it keeps happening! Why? They had no faith in his promise. They murmured and did not obey the voice of the LORD (25). So, God raised his

hand and swore that he would make them all fall in the desert (26), among the nations, and scatter them among the lands (27).

### *Baal and Phinehas (Ps 106:28-31)*

They didn't learn a thing. From there, they yoked themselves to the Baals of the nations, entering into worship and eating sacrifices offered to the dead (Ps 106:28; cf. Num 25:1-13). This again provoked the LORD to anger and he made a plague break out among them (29). Only the hand of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, the priest of Israel put a stop to it (30). For it, he was given the great covenant of the priesthood that had been established with Aaron and Levi before him. Thus, "It was counted as righteousness to him from generation to generation forever" (31), the language of covenant and justification by faith.

### *Bitter Waters (Ps 106:32-33)*

He goes backwards just a bit next, as he remembers the bitter waters of Meribah (32-33; cf. Num 20:8-13). Here they angered God yet again, and it went ill not merely for

them, but for Moses, because they made his spirit bitter and he spoke rashly with his lips, so he would not enter the Promised Land. This is a striking thing when you consider how positively Moses is portrayed in these songs and throughout Book IV. Seven times he is mentioned by name in it, but this last one remembers only his punishment. So it is with even the most humble man of the Old Testament.

### *Conquest and Settlement (Ps 106:34-42)*

The last section of the song remembers their wickedness in not obeying God as they entered the land. “**They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD commanded them**” (34; cf. **Num 33:52; Deut 7:16, 24**). Instead, they mixed with them against his command (35; **Deut 7:3**), and learned the pagan ways of godless people that he forbade them to follow (**Deut 18:9**). They didn’t listen. **They never listen.**

They served their idols which became a snare (36). They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons (37; cf. **Deut 32:17**). They poured out innocent blood, that is the blood of their own children, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, polluting the land with their blood (38). They

became unclean by their acts and played the whore in their deeds (39; cf. Jdg 1:21; 2:3, 17; 3:6).

Again, God's anger was kindled against his own people and he abhorred his heritage (40). He gave them into the hands of the nations to who hated them and ruled over them (41; cf. Jdg 2:14). They were oppressed and brought into subjection once more (42).

But God delivered them, again and again even though they were rebellious and full of iniquity (43). He looked upon their distress as they cried (44). And for his sake he remembered his covenant, relenting because he is full of steadfast love (45). He called them to be pitied by all those who held them captive (46). Such is the long history of the people of Israel.

## These Things Happened for Your Sake

As you think about these things, I want to you to understand three things as we come to the close of Book IV. **First**, the Apostle **Paul**, in a shorter but similar way to the Psalm, recounts many things in Israel's history (1Co 10:1ff). They were baptized in the sea, they ate the spiritual food and drink. But God was not pleased with them and says, “**These**

things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did” (6). Do not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed (9), he says. But know that these examples both happened and were written down for your instruction on whom the end of the ages has come. Let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall (12).

Second, in another similar recounting of history, the great Stephen takes these stories and makes them come to a stunning conclusion at the cross of Jesus Christ (Acts 7). His point is, the wickedness kept coming and coming until that very appointed time when God sent his Son to die. Why? As Peter says in an earlier sermon in the book, it was to glorify the Son, raising him from the dead, exalting him at the right hand of God (Acts 2:32-33), so that you might know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah (36). What must you do to obey so that you will not be like Israel? Believe in the Son, repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins (38).

The third thing to understand is that this ending of Psalm 106 actually paves the way in the Psalter itself, for this same truth. For as someone has called Book V, the final collection of songs, “The Return of the King.” It anticipates

the glories Peter and Stephen and Paul all speak about, centuries before they ever happened.

Until then, your response should be that of **Psalm 106:47**. “Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy Name and glory in your praise.” Then you can sing the end of Book IV and its **benediction** together as you now know anew the destructive nature of your own sins, and the power of God’s patience, goodness, and forgiveness. “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, ‘Amen!’ Praise the LORD!” (48).

## Some Chiasms in Psalm 106

### Psalm 106

A) Psa 106:1a, Praise the Lord!

B) Psa 106:1b-3, Give thanks to the Lord for He is good;

C) Psa 106:4-5, Remember me + save me with Your inheritance;

D) Psa 106:6, We have sinned with our fathers, We have committed iniquity, We have done wickedly;

E. Man's forgetfulness: God's salvation (verses 6-12)

F. Discontentment with God's provisions (verses 13-18)

G. Idolatry and deliverance through Moses (verses 19-23)

H. Refusal to obey God's Word (verses 24-27)

G<sup>1</sup>. Idolatry and deliverance through Phinehas (verses 28-33)

F<sup>1</sup>. Discontentment with God (verses 34-38)

E<sup>1</sup>. Man's rebellion: God's remembrance (verses 39-46)

D<sup>1</sup>) Psa 106:43-44, God delivered them when they cried to Him when they were brought low;

C<sup>1</sup>) Psa 106:45-47a, He remembered His covenant / Save us + return us to our inheritance;

B<sup>1</sup>) Psa 106:47b-48b, Give thanks to His holy name for He is blessed forever;

A<sup>1</sup>) Psa 106:48c, Praise the Lord!<sup>18</sup>

### Psalm 106:7-12

A. Our fathers, when they were in Egypt,

B. did not consider your wondrous works;

C. they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.

D. Yet he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.

He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, and he led them through the deep as through a desert.

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<sup>18</sup> I combined two online chiasms to form this one. These are Christine's at *ALittlePerspective*, <http://www.alittleperspective.com/psalm-106-chiastic-structure/> and "The Structure of Psalm 106," (Trinity Reformed Baptist Church, New Zealand) at: <http://www.trbc.org.nz/trbcv1/assets/files/sermons/pdf/TRB-12-04-01-AM-DM.pdf>

- D<sup>1</sup>. So he saved them from the hand of the foe and redeemed them from the power of the enemy.
- C<sup>1</sup>. And the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left.
- B<sup>1</sup>. Then they believed his words;
- A<sup>1</sup>. they sang his praise.

### Psalm 106:6-22

- A. <sup>6</sup> Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness.
- B. <sup>7</sup> Our fathers, when they were in Egypt,
- C. did not consider your wondrous works;
- D. they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.
- E. Yet he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.  
He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, and he led them through the deep as through a desert.
- E<sup>1</sup>. So he saved them from the hand of the foe and redeemed them from the power of the enemy.
- D<sup>1</sup>. And the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left.
- C<sup>1</sup>. Then they believed his words;
- B<sup>1</sup>. they sang his praise.
- A<sup>1</sup>. <sup>13</sup> But they soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel.
- A. <sup>13</sup> But they soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel.
- B. <sup>14</sup> But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness, and put God to the test in the desert;
- C. <sup>15</sup> he gave them what they asked, but sent a wasting disease among them.
- D. <sup>16</sup> When men in the camp were jealous of Moses and Aaron, the holy one of the LORD,
- E. <sup>17</sup> the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.
- E<sup>1</sup>. <sup>18</sup> Fire also broke out in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.
- D<sup>1</sup>. <sup>19</sup> They made a calf in Horeb and worshiped a metal image.

- C**<sup>1. 20</sup> They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an **ox that eats grass**.
- B**<sup>1. 21</sup> **They forgot God**, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt,
- A**<sup>1. 22</sup> **wondrous works** in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

### Psalm 106:19-33

- A**<sup>1. 19</sup> They made a calf in Horeb and worshiped a metal image.
- <sup>20</sup> They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass.
- <sup>21</sup> They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt,
- <sup>22</sup> wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.
- B**<sup>23</sup> Therefore **he said he would destroy them**—
- C**. had not **Moses**, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, **to turn away his wrath** from destroying them.
- D**<sup>1. 24</sup> Then **they despised** the pleasant land, having **no faith in his promise**.
- D**<sup>1. 25</sup> **They murmured** in their tents, and **did not obey the voice of the LORD**.
- C**<sup>1. 26</sup> Therefore **he raised his hand and swore to them that he would make them fall** in the wilderness,
- B**<sup>1. 27</sup> and would **make their offspring fall among the nations, scattering them among the lands**.
- A**<sup>1. 28</sup> Then they yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;
- <sup>29</sup> they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them.
- <sup>30</sup> Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stayed.
- <sup>31</sup> And that was counted to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever.
- <sup>32</sup> They angered him at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses on their account,
- <sup>33</sup> for they made his spirit bitter, and he spoke rashly with his lips.

Units concerns with sin and its punishment

13–15 (13–14 + 15),  
 16–18 (16 + 17–18),  
 24–27 (24–25 + 26–27),  
 32–33 (32a + 32b–33),

34–42 (34–40 + 41–42)

Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150 (Revised)*, vol. 21, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 68.

## Some OT Passages referenced in Psalm 106

### QUAIL

<sup>14</sup> But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness, and put God to the test in the desert;

<sup>15</sup> he gave them what they asked, but sent a wasting disease among them.

<sup>4</sup> Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, "Oh that we had meat to eat!" (Num 11:4)

<sup>31</sup> Then a wind from the LORD sprang up, and it brought quail from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, around the camp, and about two cubits above the ground.

<sup>32</sup> And the people rose all that day and all night and all the next day, and gathered the quail. Those who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.

<sup>33</sup> While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck down the people with a very great plague.

<sup>34</sup> Therefore the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving.

### KORAH

<sup>16</sup> When men in the camp were jealous of Moses and Aaron, the holy one of the LORD,

<sup>17</sup> the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

<sup>18</sup> Fire also broke out in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

<sup>1</sup> Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab"and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men.

<sup>2</sup> And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men.

<sup>3</sup> They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among

them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

(Num 16:1-3)

<sup>27</sup> So they got away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, together with their wives, their sons, and their little ones." (Num 16:27)

<sup>32</sup> And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods." (Num 16:32)

<sup>35</sup> And fire came out from the LORD and consumed the 250 men offering the incense." (Num 16:35)

## **GOLDEN CALF**

<sup>19</sup> They made a calf in **Horeb** and worshiped a metal image.

<sup>20</sup> They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass.

<sup>21</sup> They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt,

<sup>22</sup> wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

<sup>23</sup> Therefore he said he would destroy them-- had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them.

<sup>8</sup> Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you.

<sup>9</sup> When I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that the LORD made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water.

<sup>10</sup> And the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words that the LORD had spoken with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly.

<sup>11</sup> And at the end of forty days and forty nights the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to me, 'Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly. They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them; they have made themselves a metal image.'

<sup>13</sup> "Furthermore, the LORD said to me, 'I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stubborn people.

<sup>14</sup> Let me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.'

<sup>15</sup> So I turned and came down from the mountain, and the mountain was burning with fire. And the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands.

<sup>16</sup> And I looked, and behold, you had sinned against the LORD your God. You had made yourselves a golden calf. You had turned aside quickly from the way that the LORD had commanded you.

<sup>17</sup> So I took hold of the two tablets and threw them out of my two hands and broke them before your eyes.

<sup>18</sup> Then I lay prostrate before the LORD as before, forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all the sin that you had committed, in doing what was evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke him to anger.

<sup>19</sup> For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure that the LORD bore against you, so that he was ready to destroy you. But the LORD listened to me that time also.

<sup>20</sup> And the LORD was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him. And I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.

<sup>21</sup> Then I took the sinful thing, the calf that you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust. And I threw the dust of it into the brook that ran down from the mountain. (Deut 9:8-21)

### **Faithless Spies**

<sup>24</sup> Then they despised the pleasant land, having no faith in his promise.

<sup>25</sup> They murmured in their tents, and did not obey the voice of the LORD.

<sup>26</sup> Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them that he would make them fall in the wilderness,

<sup>27</sup> and would make their offspring fall among the nations, scattering them among the lands.

Deut 1:21–33 and also Num 13:25–14:45.

### **Baal vs. Phinehas**

<sup>28</sup> Then they yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;

<sup>29</sup> they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them.

<sup>30</sup> Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stayed.

<sup>31</sup> And that was counted to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever.

Num 25:1-13

### **BITTER MERIBAH**

<sup>32</sup> They angered him at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses on their account,

<sup>33</sup> for they made his spirit bitter, and he spoke rashly with his lips.

Num 20:8–13

## Conquest-Settlement Disobedience

<sup>34</sup> They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD commanded them,

Then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their figured stones and destroy all their metal images and demolish all their high places. (Num 33:52)

And you shall consume all the peoples that the LORD your God will give over to you. Your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you. (Deut 7:16)

And he will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under heaven. No one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. (Deut 7:24)

<sup>35</sup> but they mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did.

DEUT 7:1-6; 18:9

You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons. (Deut 7:3)

When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not **learn to follow** the abominable practices of those nations." (Deut 18:9)

<sup>36</sup> They served their idols, which became a snare to them.

<sup>37</sup> They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons;

They sacrificed to demons, not God, to deities they had never known, to new ones recently arrived, whom your ancestors had not feared." (Deut 32:17 NRS)

<sup>38</sup> they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood.

<sup>39</sup> Thus they became unclean by their acts, and played the whore in their deeds.

But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day." (Jdg 1:21)

So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" (Jdg 2:3)

Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which

their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so." (Jdg 2:17)

And their daughters they took to themselves for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods." (Jdg 3:6)

<sup>40</sup> Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people, and he abhorred his heritage;

<sup>41</sup> he gave them into the hand of the nations, so that those who hated them ruled over them.

So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies." (Jdg 2:14)

<sup>42</sup> Their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their power.

Judg 1–3

<sup>43</sup> Many times he delivered them, but they were rebellious in their purposes and were brought low through their iniquity.

<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, he looked upon their distress, when he heard their cry.

<sup>45</sup> For their sake he remembered his covenant, and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

<sup>46</sup> He caused them to be pitied by all those who held them captive.

<sup>47</sup> Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise.

<sup>48</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the LORD!"