

PSALM 105



GOD, MY EXCEEDING JOY
A JOYFUL JOURNEY THRU THE PSALMS

THE COVENANT KEEPING GOD – January 8 and 15, 2023

I. GENRE: Congregational Song of Praise with Remembrance

- A. Ps 105 has all the marks of a praise song, including introductory and concluding **calls** to praise and an elaborate **cause** for praise.
1. As with Ps 104, the cause for praise is a lengthy meditation. In Ps 105 the meditation focuses on Yahweh's covenant faithfulness (vv. 8-45a).
 2. The psalmist, who never alludes to himself, focuses on God's covenant faithfulness throughout history beginning with Abraham and continuing through to the days of Joshua.
- B. Ps 105 is often referred to as a Song of Remembrance because of its lengthy recounting of Israel's history.
1. Other historical remembrance psalms include Pss 78, 106, 135, 136.
 2. While these pss are unique in their recounting of Israel's history, they are not part of a distinct genre. Most of them are psalms of praise.
 - a. Ps 78 is a **wisdom** psalm with prophetic recollection.
 - b. Ps 105 is a praise psalm with historical remembrance.
 - c. Ps 106 is a praise ps with a rehearsal of historical failures.
 - d. Ps 135 is a praise psalm with a rehearsal of God's interventions.
 - e. Ps 136 is a psalm of thanks with a more liturgical recitation of God's interventions.

II. SETTING

A. AUTHOR & BACKGROUND

1. Verses 1-15 are found almost word-for-word in another song credited to **David**. **1 Chron. 16:8-22**.
 - a. This is the beginning of his song of dedication that celebrates the ark's permanent placement in Jerusalem in 1003 BC.
 - b. David's great song spawned several psalms including parts of Pss 96, 105, 106, and 136.
2. While the beginning of the psalm is Davidic, the remainder of it appears to be from a later era, perhaps after the Babylonian exile (c. 539 BC)
 - a. The final phrase in the v. 45 is the single Hebrew word **Hallelujah**.
 - b. It appears that the term *hallelujah* was not coined until near the end of the OT era.
 - c. It only appears in **orphan** psalms, and all of them could fit within the latter time of the OT.

B. PLACEMENT

1. Ps 105 is part of what brings Book IV of the psalter (Pss 90-106) to a **conclusion**.
 - a. From Ps 103-106, each psalm gets progressively longer, creating a crescendo of praise.
 - b. Each of these pss is a poem of praise focusing on God's worthiness.
 - c. Beginning with Ps 104, each concludes with the term, "Hallelujah." (Ps 106 also begins with it.)

2. Pss 104 and 105 share some points of similarity.

- a. Ps 104 reflects on God's greatness in creation while 105 recalls His greatness in redemption.
- b. Ps 104 focuses on God as the Creator while Ps 105 focuses on Him as the **Covenant** Keeper.
- c. The focus of attention in both pss is Yahweh. Ps 104 mentions Yahweh's name 10 times. Ps 105 mentions it only 6-7 times, but pronouns for God are used a staggering **53** times.

3. Pss 105 and 106 both recount Israel's history over a span of several centuries. They are often referred to as non-identical **twins**.

- a. Ps 105 focuses on Yahweh's grace in keeping through the centuries the covenant He made with Abraham. There are almost no references to mankind's failures in response to the covt.
- b. Ps 106 focuses on Yahweh's grace in forgiving Israel for her many failures throughout her history. It highlights Israel's covenant unfaithfulness throughout the centuries.

III. STRUCTURE

- A. As a song of praise, Ps 105 follows the basic form: a call to praise (1-7), the cause for praise (8-45a), & a repeated call to praise (45b).
- B. The cause for praise is the central **meditation** which itself divides into 6 segments of unequal length.
- C. Those 6 segments appear in chiastic order. The external sections focus on the Abrahamic covenant. The next layer describes Yahweh's faithfulness during times of sojourning. The middle 2 sections describe Yahweh's faithfulness while His people were in **Egypt**.

IV. FEATURES & APPLICATION

- A. A Covenant Carol.** Ps 105 is unique in its focus on the Abrahamic covt (vv. 6, 9, 42). In the Psalms Abraham is mentioned only here & 47:9. The Pss more often relate to the Mosaic or Davidic covts. But the Abrahamic covt is fundamental to God’s special relationship with Israel.
- B. Generational Faithfulness.** Yahweh’s faithfulness to Abraham was not just to his immediate family but up to a “thousand generations” (v. 8), an idiom for eternity.
- C. Universal Implications.** While the song focuses on God’s faithfulness to Israel seed, it draws in the whole world (vv. 1, 7). The promise to Abram includes blessing to all the families of the earth (Gen 12:3).
- D. A Little Torah:** Pss 104-106 have been likened to a little Torah. Ps 104 covers creation and primal history (Gen 1-11), Ps 105 covers the patriarchs thru the conquest (Gen 12-Josh), and Ps 106 covers Israel’s breaking of the Law throughout the centuries.
- E. An Impactful Song.** Phrases in Ps 105 appear in the NT.
1. vv. 8-9 = Lk 1:72-73 (Zechariah’s Benedictus)
 2. vv. 39-41 // 1 Cor 10:3-5
 3. vv. 20-23, 24, 27 // Acts 7:10, 17, 36
 4. v. 38 // Rev 11:10-11
- F. Righteous Remembering:** Ps 105 celebrates how God remembers (vv. 8, 42) His covt promises. God’s remembering encourages us to remember all He’s done for us (v. 5). Ps 105 is an antidote for spiritual amnesia.
- G. Plagues-a-Plenty:** Ps 105 recounts how God brought plagues against the Egyptians (vv. 28-36). The plagues are not listed in order, and not all 10 are mentioned. Just as Ps 104 gave a poetic account of creation, so Ps 105 provides a poetic account of the exodus. (Ps 78 also has a selective list of the plagues.)

- H. Calling Out Praise:** In v. 1, worshippers are told to “call on His name.” In pss of praise, calling on Yahweh is not about making requests but proclaiming His glories.
- I. The God Who Sends.** Twice (vv. 17, 26) the ps celebrates how God sent deliverers. This is part of a larger motif in the Bible which Jesus ultimately fulfills.

- J. Poetic Promises.** Yahweh is quoted 2 times (vv. 11, 15), but neither of these phrases are found in Genesis. These are poetic summaries of God’s promises.
- K. Powerful Providence.** The ps speaks of God as the Mover who brings things to pass—even bad things (vv. 16, 25). This does not make God the source of evil but the One who sovereignly orchestrates all things.

PSALM 105 <small>© M. Scott Bashoor 2022</small>		PURPOSE: The psalmist exuberantly calls Hebrew worshippers to praise Yahweh for His faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant by tracing divine grace from the time of the patriarchs thru the exodus to Israel’s possession of the land. Such thoughts should engender both praise & covenant loyalty.				Type: Song of Praise with National Remembrance Author: Unknown (1 Chr 16:8 ascribes vv. 1-15 to David) Date: Perhaps after the return from Babylon, 539 BC. (The term “Hallelujah” is a late creation in OT worship.)	
OPENING CALLS TO PRAISE vv. 1-7		CAUSE FOR PRAISE: RECOUNTING OF YAHWEH’S COVENANT FAITHFULNESS vv. 8-45A					CLOSING CALL TO PRAISE vv. 45B
Exhortations to Praise v. 1-3 Triple Call to Proclamatory Praise v. 1 Triple Call to Musical Praise v. 2 Double Call to Joyful Praise v. 3 Exhortations to Covenant Faithfulness v. 4-7 Double Call of Orientation toward Yahweh v. 4 Climactic Call to Remember Yahweh’s Covenantal Acts v. 5 Appeal to Their Spiritual Heritage v. 6 Confession of Yahweh’s Relationship & Dealings v. 7	Revelation of the Abrahamic Covenant vv. 8-11 Praise for Yahweh’s Unending Covenant Faithfulness v. 8 The Original Recipients of the Covenant vv. 9-10 Summary of the Land Promise v. 11	Faithfulness to the Patriarchs Sojourning in the Land vv. 12-15 Yahweh’s Preservation of the Patriarchal Family vv. 12-13 <i>Despite Their Fewness</i> v. 12 <i>Despite Their Wanderings</i> v. 13 Yahweh’s Protection from Threatening Powers vv. 14-15	Faithfulness to Joseph while in Egypt vv. 16-24 Appointment of the Egyptian Famine v. 16 Joseph Sent by God v. 17-19 <i>As a Suffering Slave</i> vv. 17-18 <i>As a Proven Prophet</i> v. 19 Pharaoh’s Uplifting of Joseph to Power vv. 20-22 <i>Released for Prison</i> v. 20 <i>Empowered to Govern</i> vv. 21-22 Israel’s Sojourn in Egypt vv. 23-24 <i>A Place for Safe Sojourning</i> v. 23 <i>A Time of Notable Growth</i> v. 24	Faithfulness to Israel while in Egypt vv. 25-36 Orchestration of Egyptian Hostilities v. 25 Moses & Aaron Sent by God v. 26-27 <i>As Choice Servants</i> v. 26 <i>As Wonderworkers</i> v. 27 The Plagues of Egypt vv. 28-36 <i>Darkness over the Land</i> v. 28 <i>Water to Blood</i> v. 29 <i>Multiple Infestations</i> v. 30-31 <i>Destructive Hailstorms</i> v. 32-33 <i>Locust Infestation</i> v. 34-35 <i>Death of the Firstborn</i> v. 36	Faithfulness to the Nation Sojourning after the Exodus vv. 37-41 Yahweh’s Provision for the Freed Israelites v. 37-38 Yahweh’s Protective Presence v. 39 Yahweh’s Miraculous Provision of Food and Water in the Wilderness vv. 40-41	Fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant vv. 42-45a Yahweh’s Remembrance of the Ancient Covenant v. 42 Israel’s Joyful Possession of the Land vv. 43-44 Yahweh’s Intention for Israel to Keep Covenant with Him v. 45a	Concluding Hallelujah v. 45b