

Psalms 107

Psalms 107:43 Whoever is wise will observe these things, and they will understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.

Our psalm begins with thanksgiving and with an affirmation of God's present intervention on behalf of His people. The last verse in the psalm (quoted above) reflects on the content of the psalm and concludes that the wise (who are aware of the truths that have been set forth) will as a result - "understand the lovingkindness of the Lord."

So the psalm models a method of interpreting one's experience of life. We do interpret our experience of life, do we not? And, the conclusions we come to are self-evident as they show up in the decisions and behaviors that we consequently choose. The point can be argued in both directions. I can give thought to what I observe and believe and then determine a course of action based upon my conclusions or I could look at my decisions and behaviors and from them, reach a conclusion about what it really is that I believe. These thoughts should clarify how important it would then be to accurately interpret our lives. Build your house upon the sand and when the rains come then

everything you will have built will wash away. Build on the rock and it will stand.

So, Psalms 107 begins with thanksgiving and an acknowledgment of God's present activity in the world and more specifically, the psalmist's world. The psalm appears to be post-exilic as God is seen gathering His people from the east and west, from the north and the south.

Those who believe that God is active now will also know that God has acted in history. The ways that God has acted in the past serve to define our present expectations of what He is and might be doing. We can expect God to be consistent.

The psalmist remembers first the misery of the people of God in the wilderness and how they cried out to God when they were hungry and thirsty. When they did, God answered their prayers, "Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men for He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness.

He remembers next the darkness and bondage of those who rebelled against the Lord. but then they cried out to Him and He answered their prayers, "Oh that men

would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men for He has broken the gates of bronze, and cut the bars of iron in two."

Next, he remembers a time when the sin of the people brought a judgment of physical affliction so that they were so sick that they couldn't even eat. But, when they cried to the lord to save them out of their trouble He answered their prayer, "Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare His works with rejoicing."

Then God's power at sea in both storm and calm is remembered with the conclusion, "...Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the company of the elders."

God is then remembered responding to wickedness by turning blessing into barrenness. He responds to the needs of the hungry with fruitfulness, He brings down princes and lifts up the poor. "The righteous see it and rejoice, and all iniquity stops its mouth. The wise observe these things and conclude that God is good.