

1. In honor of Father's Day, I'd like to glean some thoughts about our heavenly father from Psalm 103 (NASB)

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul, And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name.

² Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits;

³ Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases;

⁴ Who redeems your life from the pit, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion; ⁵ Who satisfies your years with good things, *So that* your youth is renewed like the eagle.

⁶ The LORD performs righteous deeds and judgments for all who are oppressed. ⁷ He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel. ⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. ⁹ He will not always strive *with us*, nor will He keep *His anger* forever. ¹⁰ He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.

¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. ¹³ Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

¹⁴ For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are *but* dust.

¹⁵ As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. ¹⁶ When the wind has passed over it, it is no more, and its place acknowledges it no longer.

¹⁷ But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,

¹⁸ To those who keep His covenant And remember His precepts to do them.

¹⁹ The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all. ²⁰ Bless the LORD, you His angels, Mighty in strength, who perform His word, obeying the voice of His word!

²¹ Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, you who serve Him, doing His will.

²² Bless the LORD, all you works of His, in all places of His dominion; Bless the LORD, O my soul!

- I. Pardons**
- II. Promotes**
- III. Pities**
- IV. Performs**

I. Pardons / forgives vs. 3

- A. David learned early on to rely on God as his father
 - i. It seems that he & his earthly father were not very close
 - ii. But David learned to put his hope and trust in God as his father
 - iii. As a shepherd boy, he'd worship the Lord
- B. David is here reminding himself to bless the Lord
 - i. In speaking to his own soul as he does in Psalm 42
- C. The first thing he mentions is that our heavenly father **forgives**
- D. The theme of forgiveness runs throughout the O.T & N.T
- E. **Is 40:1** "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God.
"Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her,
That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned;
- F. **Is 43:25** "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions,
for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.
- G. **Matt 26:28** for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured
out for many for forgiveness of sins.
- H. **Eph 1:7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the
forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
- I. God's desire is to forgive and restore
- J. Before healing diseases and blessing us is the pardoning of our
sins
 - i. Not most sins - All of our sins
- K. Because this is the great chasm between God and man**
 - i. Our biggest problem is not the bills
 - ii. It's not looking for the right balance between work & rest

- iii. It is being separated from the source of life and hope & peace
- L. David reminds himself how His heavenly father forgives totally and completely
- M. He doesn't forgive on a case by case basis
 - i. The doors of forgiveness is open to any and all
- N. This is important for God's children to remember because I don't have to start over again with God as if I'm a stranger
- O. I'm not sure if David understood that being forgiven also means that we receive a new nature
 - i. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...
 - ii. Our new nature wants to please God; obedience...
- P. Believers who don't understand this are always starting over with God
 - i. That is exhausting
 - ii. A child is only born once
- Q. What about when we make a mistake?
 - i. Missing the mark before a Holy God
 - ii. David knew a little something about that
 - iii. When he finally confessed
 - iv. So the Lord has taken away your sin **2 Samuel 12:13**
 - v. Being forgiven is our greatest need
 - vi. It sets us free

- R. Before her death, a well-known Novelist, said, "What I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness; I have nobody to forgive me."
- S. **Is 55:7** Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will **abundantly pardon**.

II. Promotes vs. 19

- A. Leaving us after salvation to figure things out is not God's heart
- B. He lifts up
 - i. Many good dads will put their young children on their shoulders
 - ii. It's a special time of bonding & love
 - iii. It makes the child feel safe & untouchable
 - iv. It also gives the child a different perspective
- C. **Vs. 19** The Lord has established His throne in heaven and His kingdom rules over all
- D. By His Word and through His Spirit and in the fellowship of other believers, God sends us an invitation to be seated with Him
- E. We've been seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph 2:6)
- F. **Hab 3:19** The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills.
- G. In watching survival shows, typically, the person(s) look for the highest mountain or hill around them and begin a climb
- H. From that perspective, they begin to understand where they are
 - i. Where the water sources are,
 - ii. Where some food may be
 - 1. Normally in the valleys you'll find the best food

- iii. What areas they may want to stay away from
 - 1. While all things are lawful to me, not all things are helpful
- iv. Where to find some shelter
- v. More importantly, how to get to the next stage
- I. God desires to lift us to a high place
- J. Just as the Lord called Moses up to the Mt.
- K. Just as the Lord met with Elijah on the Mt.
- L. Just as the Lord appeared with Moses & Elijah on the Mt.
- M. He wants our perspective to match our position

III. Pities vs. 13

- A. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him
- B. Good fathers try to understand more than the facts, they have compassion on their children's weaknesses
- C. Knowing that we don't normally get it right, God understands our frailty and has compassion
- D. He remembers that we are dust
- E. He sympathizes with our frailty and mindful of our weaknesses
- F. We don't need compassion when things are going well
- G. Compassion is needed when we are down and hurting
- H. When Joshua died and Israel lost their way
- I. They began worshipping idols instead of God
- J. As a result, their enemies plundered them and kept them in bondage

K. The people would cry out to God and God sends a deliverer

L. After walking with God for a while they would turn back and worship idols

a. This series happened many times

M. **Jud 10:11-16** The Lord said to the sons of Israel, "*Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the sons of Ammon, and the Philistines?*" ¹² Also when the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you, you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hands. ¹³ Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods; therefore I will no longer deliver you. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress." ¹⁵ The sons of Israel said to the Lord, "We have sinned, do to us whatever seems good to You; only please deliver us this day." ¹⁶ So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord; and He could bear the misery of Israel no longer.

N. **Is 63:9** In all their affliction He was afflicted

O. This wasn't just weakness of character, it was a deliberate walking away from God

a. God had every right to say, no more... that's enough

P. **He feels the pain of & sympathizes**

Q. Rev 2 tells us that knows our minds and hearts

a. God understands our thoughts & emotions

IV. Performs vs. 6

A. When we are in trouble or need help, He performs

B. Just as a good father will step in and defends his son

- C. Many times, it's just dad's presence that solves the problem
- D. The LORD execute righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed (vs. 6)
- E. Maybe David thought about his own life - Goliath
 - a. **1 Sam 17:45** Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.
- F. Or how he should have died when chased by Saul
 - a. God's invisible, yet very clear hand stopped the enemy
- G. Redeems your life from the pit (vs. 4)
- H. Maybe he thought of Joseph who was left in the pit
- I. When heaven seemed silent and all hope seemed to be lost
 - a. Looking back, God was there and orchestrating every step
 - b. Sometimes, God's hand will be very clear as He stops the mouths of lions or walk in the flame
 - c. Other times, His permissive hand may seem absent, but God is there
 - d. **Deut 31:6** Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you
- J. Let's not forget to give thanks to our heavenly father as we consider
 - a. He Pardons
 - b. He Promotes
 - c. He Pities
 - d. He Performs