

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 37 Psalm 107

by Keith Simons

Psalm 107 is a song of praise to God for his goodness, mercy, and loving kindness, highlighting his rescues, judgments, and blessings.

Duration: 33:04

Scripture: Psalm 107:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "God's Deliverance", "Testimonies of Faith"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 107, emphasizing the four testimonies of God's rescue for His people. He highlights God's enduring mercy and goodness, illustrating how He delivers those in distress, whether they are wandering in the wilderness, imprisoned, afflicted by their own foolishness, or caught in a storm at sea. Each testimony culminates in a call to praise the Lord for His wonderful works and loving kindness. Simons encourages believers to recognize and share their own testimonies of God's faithfulness and deliverance.

Transcript

Do you have a testimony of how God rescued you? Today's psalm is Psalm 107 and it contains four great testimonies of how God rescued his people. Welcome, my name is Keith Symons, I'm a Bible teacher from England and each week I present a talk on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible by reading through and studying verse by verse and word for word one of the psalms. Today it's Psalm 107.

Psalm 107 has no ancient title so we launch straight in with verse one. O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. His mercy, his kindness.

The King James translators worked on a principle that they wanted to preserve the richness of the English language and so sometimes they translated a Hebrew word by more than one English word and that happens rather strikingly in Psalm 107. It's his mercy here in the first verse. In the last verse it finishes, they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

The word mercy in verse one is the same word as loving kindness in verse 43 and there's a sort of chorus in Psalm 107. We see it first in verse eight. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness.

That word goodness is the same word as mercy in verse one and as loving kindness in verse 43. The word hasn't changed its meaning. These are different aspects, different ways in which a Hebrew word can be translated.

And so thinking about God's goodness, his loving kindness, his mercy, he shows it to his people and it's not just for a moment, it continues, it continues with them. He is looking after and caring for his people. It's not just one event, it's something that continues forever.

God is a good God and therefore he deserves that his people should give him thanks and praise. But especially, verse two, let the redeemed of the Lord say so. The redeemed, those he's rescued, those he's saved, those he's looked after, especially those he's rescued by buying them back.

And it explains that in verse two, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy. The redeemed of the Lord are those who God has redeemed from the hand of the enemy. In other words, he's taken them out of the control of the enemy, as if the enemy had them in his hand.

They're freed from the enemy because of God's wonderful work. God's rescued them. God has saved them.

And verse three, and gathered them out of the lands from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Although God's people were scattered, although they were far from the country that God had given them, God brought them back and he brought them together into the promised land. And in the psalm, it describes rescues from four different directions, the east and the west, the north and the south, says the King James Bible.

But actually the Hebrew says from the sea. And one of these testimonies, the last one, we'll see is how God rescued his people from the sea. Well, why does it say from the sea rather than from the south? Well, if you look at a map of Israel, you'll see there were countries where Israel's people were in captivity on the west side, places like Egypt and around the Mediterranean.

And on the north side, there were enemy countries like Syria. And on the east side, there were enemies like Babylon. Each of these countries in turn was a cause of captivity for Israel's people.

But on the south side of Israel, there's a desert and then this Red Sea. So maybe it's appropriate that we should read about the sea rather than the south. And maybe, as the King James translator thought, it has the same meaning here.

So the first of these testimonies begins at verse four. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way. They found no city to dwell in.

A solitary way means a lonely path, especially a desert path. The wilderness is the wild country, the place where no one lives. But they were living there.

They were wandering in this difficult country. They were searching for something and they couldn't find it because they found no city to dwell in. We think of Israel's people in the desert after they escaped from Egypt, wandering around the desert, not reaching the promised land, not reaching a place to live, just reaching a place of suffering.

And there, verse five, hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Their bodies were hungry and thirsty. They needed food, they needed water.

But worse still, their soul fainted in them. Their life seemed to be ebbing away from them. Their inner life was in such difficulty, such weakness.

But this is a testimony, a testimony of God's power to save. Verse six, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them out of their distresses. Verse seven, and he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.

Yes, Israel's people were desperate, but they called to the Lord and the Lord rescued them. He delivered them. He brought the generation unto Joshua into the promised land.

He took them there. He provided for them so that they might go to a city of habitation, a place where they could live. Habitation means a place to live, a place where they could build cities in the land God had promised to them.

And so the chorus, which we see four times in this psalm, begins in verse eight. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Children of men means really mankind, people, humans.

It doesn't mean specifically children, although it can mean children. God has been so wonderful to people and so they should praise God for he satisfied the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. When their soul was so desperate, when the life within them was so desperate, God satisfied them.

When their soul was hungry and needed help, God gave them good things. Verse 10. And this is our second testimony.

It's the testimony of prisoners. Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron. Well, they sit in darkness like the darkness of a prison.

In the shadow of death, they're close to death. What's holding them there in that prison? Well, there's iron bonds on their arms and on their legs holding them down. That's holding down their bodies.

But their souls too are bound in affliction. The sorrow, the pain, the difficulty of it. It felt overwhelming.

It felt too much for them. And what's more, their state there in prison was the result of their own sins. Verse 11.

Because they rebelled against the words of God and contemned the counsel of the Most High. The counsel means the advice, what Most High or God is telling you to do. Contempt means they hated it.

They hated that advice. They hated what God wanted. Verse 12.

Therefore, he brought down their heart with labor. They fell down and there was none to help. He permitted them to suffer from labor, from hard work, from distress.

And they had no strength in them. They fell down. They couldn't do the work.

They were desperate. Prisoners in ancient times, maybe in some countries today, are forced to work and to work to the full extent of their energy. They were desperate.

But verse 13. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he saved them out of their distress. Yes, God is a God who saves or rescues.

He takes people who are in trouble and when they turn to him, he answers their prayer. He rescues them. Verse 14.

He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death and break their bands in sunder. He took them out of that prison, out of that dark place, out of that place where they felt they would die at any moment. Yes, there were bands that held their wrists or that held their feet.

He break them in sunder. He broke them apart. He broke them in two so that they walked free.

And I'll call this again. Verse 15. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

For he hath broken the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder. That was the description of the strongest gates. The gates of a city might be fortified with brass, a strong metal, and they'd have bars of iron to act as a lock for those gates.

But God has opened those gates and the prisoners have walked into freedom because God has set them free. Our third testimony begins in verse 17 and it begins with the word fools. And that word needs explanation.

A fool in the Bible often doesn't mean just someone who's stupid or unaware of things. It means someone who hates wisdom, who hates what is right, who just wants to please himself and live in luxury every day. And that is who we're talking about in verse 17.

Fools because of their transgression and because of their iniquities are afflicted. Yes, their sins, their transgression and their iniquities are great and God's judgment comes against them. They become ill and in verse 18 their soul abhorreth all manner of meat and they draw near to the gates of death.

So these people who love luxury, who love to eat and drink, now find that they abhor or hate all manner of meat. In the King James Bible, food is often translated as meat. It doesn't mean just what we call today meat.

It means grain as well. And these foolish people who hated all that God told them and who turned totally away from God because they wanted luxury, now find that luxury doesn't satisfy them. Their bodies, their souls within them are rejecting their food and death is drawing close.

But God has a rescue even for these foolish people. Verse 19, then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and he saveth them out of their distress. When they turn from their sin and turn to God, God is glad to forgive them, to give them a right relationship with himself and to heal them.

How does he heal them? Verse 20, he sent his word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions. Or once they hated God's word, now they love it. Once God's word seemed to them to be a cause of restraint and restriction, but now God's word really is the cause of their healing and it delivers them from the trouble that they are in.

So we come to our chorus again for the third time. Verse 21, oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men and let them sacrifice the sacrifices of

thanksgiving and declare his works with rejoicing. Oh these people who were so far from God now to come to God's house, the temple with a sacrifice that often meant in the Old Testament an animal which they offered to God.

Here they're giving gifts to God and gifts to God because they are so thankful to him. The God whom once they hated, whose word once they turned against so bitterly, they now worship with thanksgiving and they declare the works of God with rejoicing. They are joyful in God, they sing for joy to praise God for his goodness.

The God who saves, the God who heals, the God who rescues. We're on to our fourth testimony now with verse 23 and these have gone to the south, maybe to the great port that Solomon built on the Red Sea port and they go down to the sea and ships that do business in great waters. They hope, as Solomon's sailors did, to make great profits trading with foreign countries for gold and for all sorts of luxurious items and so they go down to the sea and they get into their boats.

These are boats which we couldn't call them ships today by the size but to them these boats were huge, they were the biggest seafaring boats. They put a lot of money into this voyage and they hoped to make great wealth but they saw greatness of another kind. Verse 24, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep for he commandeth and raises the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof.

Oh they see that their great ships or boats are tiny compared to God's greatness. They see the vastness of the sea in all directions. They see the deep, the sea in front of them.

They see the animals, the great sea creatures so different from anything in land and they see the power of God in the storm for when God commands the storm is raised and the waves lift up and what looked like to them a huge ship becomes a weak little thing with the water around them swelling and moving around. Verse 26, they mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths. This is the riding over these great waves and then down the wave.

They realise that their hope for great profit is now in great danger. Their lives are in great danger. They give up in despair.

Their soul is melted because of trouble and as the storm continues they reel to and fro. They shake backwards and forwards. They stagger like a drunken man.

They try to walk even across the surface of their boat. They can't do it. Like someone who's had too much alcohol to drink, like someone who's had wine in abundance, they're just falling everywhere and they are at their wit's end.

They're at the end of their wisdom. Their knowledge of what to do has finished but they know that there is a great God in heaven, a God who cares about them even in their difficulty and they realise that they must turn from their desire of profit and they must turn to the living God, the God who created heaven and earth, the land and the sea, the God who alone can save them. Verse 28, then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and he bringeth them out of their distress.

He maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still. Yes, God answers their prayer. The waves die down.

The storm becomes calm and, verse 30, then are they glad because they be quiet. So he bringeth them to their desired haven. Yes, they're glad the storm is finished.

They're glad that instead of all this storm there is now quietness on the sea and now they can sail on and God brings them to the port, to the port where they're again in safety, to the city where they can live in comfort. Verse 31, O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

O let these seamen, who God's rescued from this terrible storm, let them exalt God. Let them lift up God's name. Let them declare how great God is when God's people assemble together as a congregation or when the elders, the leaders of the city, the leaders of the community gather together.

Let them declare the wonders of what God has done. So we've had the four testimonies and God's brought Israel's people back each time to their homes in Israel. And now he brings the Promised Land to them.

He prepares it for them. He makes it ready for them to live in. Before Israel's people lived in the Promised Land, foreigners lived there, wicked foreigners who lived evil lives and served gods which told them to do terrible things.

But God has carried out his judgment against those evil people. Verse 33, he turneth rivers into a wilderness, into a desert, and the water springs into dry ground. The water springs are places from which people get water.

They've gone dry. Verse 34, a fruitful land into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. So he's taken their land which seemed so fruitful, which had such good harvests, and he's made it into a dry land because of the people living wickedly there.

But all this is preparation for God's people to come there. God's people who've been so desperate, who've been so hungry, God has provided a place for them. And so now that he's cleared that land of its former inhabitants, verse 35, God, he turneth the wilderness into a standing water, a pool, and dry ground into water springs.

Yes, the springs have flowed again. There's now abundant water. So there, verse 36, he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation.

So they can come there now. They can build their city. They can live there.

Habitation means a place to live. And verse 37, they sow the fields and plant vineyards, plant fruit gardens, which may yield fruits of increase. In other words, there's going to be a good harvest in this land.

Around the city, there's fields, there's vineyards, there's a place for the people to live. And they who were so hungry, God has provided for. And it's not just a case of a city and fields and gardens.

It's God's goodness too. Verse 38, he blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, so they have children and their families increase. And not just their families, because verse 38, second half of the verse, God suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

Suffereth means allows. He doesn't allow their cattle to decrease. In other words, their farm animals increase in number as well.

And we might think that will be the end of the psalm. We might think their troubles were over. But this is not the time of Messiah's rule yet.

Everything is not perfect. They have enemies still. And those enemies still oppose them, even though they're now serving God in the land God's given to them.

They still will have troubles. They still must look to God. They still must trust God to provide for them, because troubles will come.

And they come, in verse 39, again they are diminished and brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow. Diminished is just a word to describe. We say diminished today.

Their numbers are reduced. They find themselves in trouble and in difficulty. And the people responsible, their enemies are princes, powerful people.

But God, in verse 40, poureth contempt upon princes and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way. In other words, he takes these princes and he punishes them. He puts an end to the power of their enemies, because he is establishing the rule of his Messiah.

He is establishing his perfect rule on earth and in the land. And those princes, those evil rulers, those powerful forces which were against them, they are assigned to the desert and to a place in the desert where they have no way to return to power and to influence. And instead he makes new rulers over his people and over the land.

Verse 41, yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction and maketh him families like a flock. Oh now, Messiah is ruling. Now the man who is poor is in a position on high, a position of honour, free from affliction.

And now his family can increase like a flock of sheep increases. And verse 42, the righteous shall see it and rejoice. God's people, the good people, will be glad because of what God has done and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

In other words, it portrays iniquity or evil as if it's a person here who can't speak even, because she sees that she has no power. She sees her total and utter defeat. And so God will bring about the defeat of every evil force, every evil power, and he will establish the rule of his Son, his Messiah.

Whoso is wise, verse 43, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord. And so we come to the end of this long psalm with the declaration of God's love to his people. And the wise person observes these things and knows that God truly is kind and God truly is loving.

In a moment I'm going to read you the whole psalm, but first my email address is 333kjb at gmail.com. That's 333kjb at gmail.com. And now I'm going to read the whole psalm. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way. They found no city to dwell in.

Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their troubles, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Such as sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron, because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High.

Therefore he brought down their heart with labour. They fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.

He brought them out of darkness, and the shadow of death, and break their bands in sunder. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad because they be quiet, so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water springs into dry ground, a fruitful land into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water springs, and there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation, and sow the fields and plant vineyards which may yield fruits of increase. He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

Again they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow. He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way. Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.

The righteous shall see it and rejoice, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth. Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

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