

PSALM 107

v. 1 – (You [p.]) give praise to Yahweh, (2 words – יהוה ליהודה)

for (He is) good, (2 words – כִּי - טוֹב)

for forever His covenant love. (2 words – כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ)

The word for praise most naturally means “to confess our faith, to give voice to our praise to God, and to proclaim our thanks.” See vv. 8, 15, 21, 31. The name “Judah” comes from this word.

Which pronoun should we assume? “He” referring to God? “It” referring to praise? Most likely God because the next line refers to God’s covenant love.

v. 2 – Let those who are the redeemed of Yahweh say, (3 words – יֹאמְרוּ גְּאוּלֵּי יְהוָה)

which He redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. (4 words – אֲשֶׁר גָּאֲלָם מִיַּד - צָר)

v. 3 – And from the lands He gathered them, (2 words – וּמֵאַרְצוֹת קִבֵּצָם)

from the east and from the west, (2 words – מִמְּזֶרֶחַ וּמִמְּעֵרָב)

from the north and from the sea. (2 words – מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם)

v. 4 – They wandered in the wilderness in the waste of the way, (4 words – תָּעוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר בִּישִׁימוֹן דֶּרֶךְ)

a city of a dwelling place they did not find. (4 words – עִיר מוֹשָׁב לֹא מָצְאוּ)

v. 5 – (They were) hungry, also thirsty, (3 words – רָעִיבִים גַּם - צָמְאִים)

their soul in them was fainting. (3 words – נַפְשָׁם בָּהֶם תִּתְעַטֵּף)

v. 6 – Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distress to them, (5 words – וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל - יְהוָה בְּצָר לָהֶם)

from their afflictions He delivered them. (2 words – מִמַּצְוֹקוֹתֵיהֶם יִצִּילֵם)

The Cry Refrain – compare vv. 6, 13, 19, 28 – identical, except for the final verb (delivered – v. 6, saved – v. 13, saved – v. 19, brought out – v. 28)

Also, the word “cry out” is slightly different. In vv. 6 and 28 it is tsaq; in vv. 13 and 19 it is zaaq. Both have the same overall meaning and can refer to a deep, anguished cry for help.

v. 7 – Then He led them in the straight way, (3 words – וַיְדִרֵיכֶם בְּדֶרֶךְ יֵשָׁרָה)

to go toward a city of a dwelling place. (4 words – לְלֶכֶת אֶל - עִיר מוֹשָׁב)

In the first line, the verb and the noun are the same root.

v. 8 – Let them praise in regard to Yahweh, (2 words – יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה)

(for) His covenant love, (1 word – חֶסֶדוֹ)

and His wonders to the sons of Adam. (3 words – וּנְפִלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

The Praise Refrain – compare vv. 8, 15, 21, 31 – identical to each other.

The adjective in the last line, “wonders,” is feminine plural. Most translations insert an implied noun for the adjective to modify – “wonderful deeds” (NIV), “wonderful/wondrous works” (NKJ, ESV, NRSV), “wonderful acts” (NAS footnote), though the NAS simply has “wonders.” None of these implied nouns are feminine. Some commentators insert “mercies, compassions” because of “covenant love/hesed” in the second line; however, these are not feminine words either. The normal Hebrew word for love is feminine, which could fit with the parallel

“covenant love/hesed” – “wonderful loves.” Since Hebrew does not have a neuter gender, possibly we could translate it as “wonderful things,” or simply “wonders” like the NAS – as I have done. Regardless, the doctrine of common grace is communicated here.

v. 9 – For, (1 word – כִּי)

He satisfied a dried out soul, (3 words – הִשְׂבִּיעַ נֶפֶשׁ שְׁחָקָה)

and a hungry soul He filled (with) good. (4 words – וַיִּמָּלֵא רֹעֵבָה מְלֵא טוֹב)

Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm

v. 10 – Those who were sitting (in) darkness and (in) the shadow of death,

(יֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ וְצִלְמוֹת (3 words –

(were) prisoners of affliction and iron. (3 words – וְאֶסִּירֵי עָנִי וּבְרִזָּל)

v. 11 – For, (1 word – כִּי)

they rebelled (against) the sayings of God, (3 words – הִמָּרּוּ אִמְרֵי - אֵל)

and the counsel of the Most High they spurned. (3 words – וַעֲצַת עֲלִיּוֹן נֶאֱצָצוּ)

Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm

v. 12 – Then He humbled with toil their heart, (3 words – וַיִּכְנַע בְּעָמָל לֵבָם)

they stumbled and there was not one to help. (3 words – וְאֵין עֹזֶר - בָּשָׁלוּ)

v. 13 – Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distress to them, (5 words – וַיִּזְעָקוּ אֵל - יְהוָה בְּצָר לָהֶם)

from their afflictions He saved them. (2 words – מִמַּצָּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם)

The Cry Refrain – compare vv. 6, 13, 19, 28 – see note on v. 6

v. 14 – He brought them out from darkness and the shadow of death,

(יּוֹצִיאֵם מִחֹשֶׁךְ וְצִלְמוֹת (3 words –

and their chains He broke apart. (2 words – וּמוֹסְרוֹתֵיהֶם יִנְתֵּק)

Compare v. 10

v. 15 – Let them praise in regard to Yahweh, (2 words – יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה)

(for) His covenant love, (1 word – חֶסֶדּוֹ)

and His wonders to the sons of Adam. (3 words – וּנְפִלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

The Praise Refrain – compare vv. 8, 15, 21, 31 – identical to each other. See note on v. 8

v. 16 – For He shattered doors of bronze, (4 words – כִּי - שִׁבַּר דְּלָתוֹת נְחֹשֶׁת)

and bars of iron He cut down. (3 words – וּבְרִיחֵי בְרִזָּל גָּדַע)

Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm

v. 17 – (They became) fools because of their way of rebellion, (3 words – אֲוִלִּים מִדֶּרֶךְ פִּשְׁעֵם)

and because of their iniquities they were humbled. (2 words – וּמַעֲוֹנֵיהֶם יִתַּעֲנוּ)

Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm

The last verb indicates that they brought it on themselves; this influences the assumed verb at the beginning.

- v. 18 – All food their soul abhorred, (4 words – כָּל - אֲכָל תִּתְעַב נַפְשָׁם)
 then they arrived as far as the gates of death. (4 words – וַיָּגִיעוּ עַד - שַׁעְרֵי מוֹת)
 Again, they make it happen due to their sin.
- v. 19 – Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distress to them, (5 words – וַיִּזְעֻקוּ אֶל - יְהוָה בַּצָּר לָהֶם)
 from their afflictions He saved them. (2 words – מִמַּצְקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעַם)
 The Cry Refrain – compare vv. 6, 13, 19, 28 – see note on v. 6
- v. 20 – He was sending His word and He was healing them, (3 words – וַיִּשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וַיִּרְפָּאֵם)
 and He was delivering from their pits. (2 words – וַיַּמְלֵט מִשְׁחִיתוֹתָם)
- v. 21 – Let them praise in regard to Yahweh, (2 words – יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה)
 (for) His covenant love, (1 word – חֶסֶדוֹ)
 and His wonders to the sons of Adam. (3 words – וַנְּפַלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם)
 The Praise Refrain – compare vv. 8, 15, 21, 31 – identical to each other. See note on v. 8.
- v. 22 – And let them sacrifice sacrifices of praise, (3 words – וַיִּזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי תוֹדָה)
 and let them recount His works with joyful yelling. (3 words – וַיְסַפְּרוּ מַעֲשָׂיו בִּרְנָה)
 Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism
- v. 23 – Those who go down to the sea in the ships, (3 words – יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בַּאֲנִיּוֹת)
 those who do work on many waters, (4 words – עוֹשֵׂי מְלָאכָה בְּמַיִם רַבִּים)
 Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism
- v. 24 – They, they saw the deeds of Yahweh, (4 words – הֵמָּה רָאוּ מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה)
 and His wonders in the deep. (2 words – וַנְּפַלְאוֹתָיו בְּמַצּוֹלָה)
 Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Ellipsis
- v. 25 – Then He spoke, (1 word – וַיֹּאמֶר)
 then He caused to stand a wind of a storm, (3 words – וַיַּעֲמֵד רוּחַ סְעָרָה)
 then she raised His waves. (2 words – וַתִּרְוּמֵם גָּלְיוֹ)
 Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism
 “She” refers to the wind/storm; “His” could refer to God, the deeds in v. 24, or sea in v. 23 – “its”
- v. 26 – They went up (to the) heavens, (2 words – יָעָלוּ שָׁמַיִם)
 they went down (to the) depths, (2 words – יָרְדוּ תְהוֹמוֹת)
 their soul in evil was melting. (3 words – נַפְשָׁם בְּרָעָה תִתְמוּגָג)
- v. 27 – They were leaping and they were tottering like the drunken man,
 (3 words – יַחֲזֹגוּ וַיִּגְעֻזוּ כְּשׂוֹכֹר)
 and all of their wisdom was ruined. (3 words – וְכָל - חֵכְמָתָם תִּתְבַּלַּע)

- v. 28 – Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distress to them, (5 words – וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בְּצָרָה לָהֶם)
and out of their afflictions He brought them out. (2 words – וּמִמְצוֹקֵיהֶם יוֹצִיאָם)
The Cry Refrain – compare vv. 6, 13, 19, 28 – see note on v. 6.
- v. 29 – He commanded a storm to a whisper, (3 words – וַיִּקַּם סְעָרָה לְדִמְמָה)
then their waves were silenced. (2 words – וַיִּיחָשׁוּ גִלְיָהֶם)
- v. 30 – Then they rejoiced because they became calm, (3 words – וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כִּי־יִשְׁתַּקּוּ)
then He led them unto a harbor of pleasure. (4 words – וַיְנַחֵם אֶל־מַחֲזֹחַ חֶפְצָם)
- v. 31 – Let them praise in regard to Yahweh, (2 words – יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה)
(for) His covenant love, (1 word – חֶסֶדוֹ)
and His wonders to the sons of Adam. (3 words – וַנְּפַלְאוֹתָיו לְבְנֵי אָדָם)
The Praise Refrain – compare vv. 8, 15, 21, 31 – identical to each other. See note on v. 8.
- v. 32 – And let them exalt Him in the assembly of (the) people, (3 words – וַיְרַמְּמוּהוּ בִּקְהָל־עָם)
and in the dwelling place of elders let them praise Him. (3 words – וּבְמוֹשְׁבַּי זְקֵנִים יְהַלְלוּהוּ)
Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm
This is a different word for praise, compare v.1. Hallelujah comes from this word.
- v. 33 – Let Him make rivers in regard to a desert, (3 words – יַשֵּׁם נְהָרוֹת לְמִדְבָּר)
and springs of water in regard to thirsty ground, (3 words – וּמַצְאֵי מַיִם לְצִמְאוֹן)
Synonymous / Synthetic Parallelism with Ellipsis – this also includes the first line of v. 34.
- v. 34 – a land of fruit into a salt plain, (3 words – אֶרֶץ פְּרִי לְמִלְחָה)
because of the evil of those who are dwelling in it. (3 words – מִרְעַת יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ)
- v. 35 – Let Him make a desert into the reed pools of water, (4 words – יַשֵּׁם מִדְבָּר לְאֲגָם־מַיִם)
and dry land into springs of water. (4 words – וְאַרְצָן צִיָּה לְמַצְאֵי מַיִם)
Synonymous Parallelism with Ellipsis
- v. 36 – Then He made hungry ones dwell there, (3 words – וַיּוֹשֶׁב שָׁם רְעֵבִים)
then they established a city, a dwelling place. (3 words – וַיִּכְוֶנּוּ עִיר מוֹשָׁב)
- v. 37 – Then they sowed fields, (2 words – וַיִּזְרְעוּ שָׂדוֹת)
then they planted vineyards, (2 words – וַיִּטְעוּ כֶּרְמִים)
then they made a fruit of a yield. (3 words – וַיַּעֲשׂוּ פְרִי תְבוּאָה)
- v. 38 – Then He blessed them, (1 word – וַיְבָרֶכֶם)
then they multiplied exceedingly, (2 words – וַיִּרְבוּ מְאֹד)
and their beasts He does not cause to become few. (3 words – וּבְהֶמְתָּם לֹא יַמְעִיט)
Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm in 2nd and 3rd lines

- v. 39 – Then they became few, (1 word – וַיִּמְעָטוּ)
 then they bowed down, (1 word – וַיִּשְׁחוּ)
 from oppression of evil and trouble. (3 words – מֵעֲצָר רָעָה וְיָגוֹן)
- v. 40 – After pouring out contempt upon nobles, (4 words – שָׁפַךְ בּוֹז עַל - נְדִיבִים)
 then He caused them to wander in nothingness, not a way. (4 words – וַיַּתְעֵם בְּתֵהוּ לֹא - דֶּרֶךְ)
- v. 41 – Then He exalted poor out of affliction, (3 words – וַיִּשְׁגֹּב אֶבְיוֹן מֵעוֹנִי)
 then He set like a flock clans. (3 words – וַיִּשֶׁם כְּצֹאן מִשְׁפָּחוֹת)
- v. 42 – Upright ones are seeing and they are glad, (3 words – יֵרְאוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ)
 but all unrighteousness shut its mouth. (4 words – וְכָל - עוֹלָה קִפְצָה פִּיהָ)
- v. 43 – Who is wise? (2 words – מִי - חָכָם)
 then let him keep these (things), (2 words – וַיִּשְׁמֹר - אֵלֶּה)
 then let them understand the covenant loves of Yahweh. (3 words – וַיַּתְּבוּנֵנוּ חֻסְדֵי יְהוָה)

Broader Structure:

Title

- vv. 1-3 – Joy of Redemption
- vv. 4-9 – Wanderers Retrieved
- vv. 10-16 – Prisoners Released
- vv. 17-22 – The Sick Restored
- vv. 23-32 – The Storm-Tossed Rescued
- vv. 33-42 – The Supreme Transformer
- v. 43 – Epilogue of Wisdom

Title

- vv. 1-3 – A Story of Redemption
- vv. 4-9 – Returning From the Desert Wasteland
- vv. 10-16 – Out of Darkness
- vv. 17-22 – Some Became Fools
- vv. 23-32 – Calming Stormy Waters
- vv. 33-38 – Deserts Transformed Into Pools
- vv. 39-42 – Lifting Up the Needy
- v. 43 – Wisdom

Yahweh – 12x

Elohim – God – 0x

El – God – 1x – v. 11

Elyon – Most High – 1x – v. 11

3rd Person Singular referring to Yahweh – 45x

1st Person – 0x

2nd Person – 1x – v. 1

3rd Person singular – 1x – v. 43

3rd Person plural – 69x