
PSALM 105: 1 Give thanks to the LORD! Call on his name! Make his doings known among the peoples.

An exhortation to praise God for his wondrous works, Psa 105:1-5; his goodness to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Psa 105:6-16; to Joseph in Egypt, Psa 105:17-22; to Israel in Egypt, Psa 105:23-25; to Moses in the same land, Psa 105:26; the plagues sent on the Egyptians, Psa 105:27-36; the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, Psa 105:37, Psa 105:38; how he supported them in the wilderness, Psa 105:39-43; and brought them into Canaan, Psa 105:44, Psa 105:45.

We find several verses of this Psalm in 1 Chronicles 16, from which it is evident that David was the author of the principal part of it: but it was probably enlarged and sung at the restoration of the people from the Babylonish captivity. The hallelujah which terminates the preceding Psalm, is made the title of this by the Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic, and Arabic: but it has no title either in the Hebrew or Chaldee. The Syriac considers it a paraphrase on the words, "Fear not, Jacob, to go down into Egypt; and teach us spiritually not to fear when we are obliged to contend with devils; for God is our shield, and will fight for us." The Psalm is a history of God's dealings with Abraham and his posterity, till their settlement in the promised land.

Verse 1

O give thanks - He had been meditating on God's gracious dealings with their fathers; and he calls upon himself and all others to magnify God for his mercies.

PSALM 105: 2 Sing to him, sing praises to him! Tell of all his marvellous works.

Verse 2

Talk ye of all his wondrous works - נִפְלְאוֹתָיו niphleothaiv, "of his miracles." Who have so many of these to boast of as Christians! Christianity is a tissue of miracles; and every part of the work of grace on the soul is a miracle. Genuine Christian converts may talk of miracles from morning to night; and they should talk of them, and recommend to others their miracle-working God and Savior.

PSALM 105: 3 Glory in his holy name. Let the heart of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

Verse 3

Glory ye in his holy name - Show the name Jesus: exult in it - praise it. His name was called Jesus; because he came to save his people from their sins.

Let the heart of them rejoice - That is, the heart of those shall rejoice who seek the Lord: therefore it is added: -

PSALM 105: 4 Seek the LORD and his strength. Seek his face forever more.

Verse 4

Seek the Lord - Worship the one only Supreme Being, as the only and all-sufficient good for the soul of man.

And his strength - Man is weak; and needs connection with the strong God that he may be enabled to avoid evil and do good.

Seek his face - Reconciliation to him. Live not without a sense of his favor.

Evermore - Let this be thy chief business. In and above all thy seeking, seek this.

PSALM 105: 5 Remember his marvellous works that he has done; his wonders, and the judgements of his mouth,

Verse 5

Remember his marvellous works - Keep up communion with thy Maker, that thou mayest neither forget him nor his works.

The judgments of his mouth - Whatsoever he has spoken concerning good or evil. His commands, promises, threatenings; and particularly what he has foretold, and what he has done.

PSALM 105: 6 you seed of Abraham, his servant, you children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

Verse 6

O ye seed of Abraham - Ye Jews especially, who have been the peculiar objects of the Divine favor.

PSALM 105: 7 He is the LORD, our God. His judgements are in all the earth.

Verse 7

He is the Lord our God - He is Jehovah, the self-existent and eternal God. He is our God, he is our portion; has taken us for his people, and makes us happy in his love.

The following abstract of the history of the Israelites presents but few difficulties. See the notes on Psalm 78 (note).

PSALM 105: 8 He has remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations,

PSALM 105: 9 the covenant which he made with Abraham, his oath to Isaac,

PSALM 105: 10 and confirmed the same to Jacob for a statute; to Israel for an everlasting covenant,

PSALM 105: 11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance";

PSALM 105: 12 when they were but a few men in number, yes, very few, and foreigners in it.

Verse 12

But a few men - When all appearances were against them, and nothing but the arm of God could have brought them through their difficulties, and given them a settlement in the promised land.

PSALM 105: 13 They went about from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people.

Verse 13

When they went from one nation to another - From several circumstances in the history of the travels of the ancient Hebrews, we find that the wilderness through which they then passed was well peopled.

PSALM 105: 14 He allowed no one to do them wrong. Yes, he reproved kings for their sakes,

PSALM 105: 15 "Don't touch my anointed ones! Do my prophets no harm!"

Verse 15

Touch not mine anointed - It is supposed that the patriarchs are here intended; but the whole people of Israel may be meant. They were a kingdom of priests and kings unto God; and prophets, priests, and kings were always anointed.

PSALM 105: 16 He called for a famine on the land. He destroyed the food supplies.

PSALM 105: 17 He sent a man before them. Joseph was sold for a slave.

PSALM 105: 18 They bruised his feet with shackles. His neck was locked in irons,

PSALM 105: 19 until the time that his word happened, and the LORD's word proved him true.

Verse 19

Until the time that his word came - This appears to refer to the completion of Joseph's interpretation of the dreams of the chief butler and baker.

The Word of the Lord tried him - This seems to refer to the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, called אמרת יהוה imrath Yehovah, "the oracle of the Lord," because sent by him to Pharaoh. See Gen 41:26, and Kennicott in loco.

PSALM 105: 20 The king sent and freed him; even the ruler of peoples, and let him go free.

PSALM 105: 21 He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all of his possessions;

PSALM 105: 22 to discipline his princes at his pleasure, and to teach his elders wisdom.

PSALM 105: 23 Israel also came into Egypt. Jacob lived in the land of Ham.

PSALM 105: 24 He increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their adversaries.

PSALM 105: 25 He turned their heart to hate his people, to conspire against his servants.

Verse 25

He turned their heart - "Their heart was turned." So the Syriac and Arabic. After befriending the Hebrews on Joseph's account, to whom they were so deeply indebted, finding them to multiply greatly in the land, and at last to become more powerful than the Egyptians themselves, they turned their attention to the adoption of measures, in order to prevent the Hebrews from possessing themselves of the government of the whole land; they curtailed them of their privileges, and endeavored to depress them by all possible means, and by a variety of legal enactments. This appears to be the sole meaning of the phrase, "He turned their heart;" or, "their heart was turned."

PSALM 105: 26 He sent Moses, his servant, and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

PSALM 105: 27 They performed miracles among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

Verse 27

They showed his signs - Here is a reference to the plagues with which God afflicted the Egyptians. See Exodus 7-12 (note), Psa 78:43 (note), and the notes on them.

PSALM 105: 28 He sent darkness, and made it dark. They didn't rebel against his words.

Verse 28

They rebelled not against his word - Instead of ולא מרו velo maru, "they rebelled," some think that a ש shin has been lost from before the word, and that it should be read ולא שמרו velo shamru, "they did not observe or keep his word." Or the words may be spoken of Moses and Aaron; they received the commandment of God, and they did not rebel against it. They believed what he had spoken, and acted according to his orders. It could not be spoken of the Egyptians; for they rebelled against his words through the whole course of the transactions.

PSALM 105: 29 He turned their waters into blood, and killed their fish.

PSALM 105: 30 Their land swarmed with frogs, even in the rooms of their kings.

PSALM 105: 31 He spoke, and swarms of flies came, and lice in all their borders.

PSALM 105: 32 He gave them hail for rain, with lightning in their land.

PSALM 105: 33 He struck their vines and also their fig trees, and shattered the trees of their country.

Verse 33

He smote their vines also, and their fig trees - This is not mentioned in Exodus; but we have had it before, Psa 78:47.

PSALM 105: 34 He spoke, and the locusts came, and the grasshoppers, without number,

PSALM 105: 35 ate up every plant in their land; and ate up the fruit of their ground.

PSALM 105: 36 He struck also all the firstborn in their land, the first fruits of all their manhood.

PSALM 105: 37 He brought them out with silver and gold. There was not one feeble person among his tribes.

PSALM 105: 38 Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them had fallen on them.

PSALM 105: 39 He spread a cloud for a covering, fire to give light in the night.

PSALM 105: 40 They asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of the sky.

PSALM 105: 41 He opened the rock, and waters gushed out. They ran as a river in the dry places.

Verse 41

He opened the rock, and the waters rushed out - See the note on Exo 17:6, to which I can now add, that a piece of this rock, broken off by the hand of my nephew, E. S. A. Clarke, in the course of the present year [1822,] now lies before me. It is fine granite; and so well distinguished as a granite, that the feldt-spar, the mica, and the quartz, of which granite is composed, appear very distinctly. It is worthy of remark, that, as granite is supposed, in the most accredited systems of geology, to be the very basis of the earth, the original rock, and all other substances to be superimpositions upon it, and as the decompositions of the feldt-spar produce pure vegetable earth, this rock should be used for this purpose, and should be an emblem of Jesus Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of the human race; and that it should signify him who is the basis of all things; who upholds all by the word of his power; without whom nothing is stable, nothing fruitful; from whom alone the water of life proceeds; and in whose name only is salvation. And that rock (in the wilderness) was Christ! and it is the only remaining emblem of him in creation.

PSALM 105: 42 For he remembered his holy word, and Abraham, his servant.

PSALM 105: 43 He brought his people out with joy, his chosen with singing.

PSALM 105: 44 He gave them the lands of the nations. They took the labour of the peoples in possession,

PSALM 105: 45 that they might keep his statutes, and observe his laws. Praise the LORD!

Verse 45

That they might observe his statutes - That they might be properly instructed, and properly disciplined. This is the end proposed by Divine revelation: men are to be made wise unto salvation, and then to be brought under the yoke of obedience. He who is not conformed to God's word shall not enter into Christ's kingdom.