

Psalm 103 is the 103rd psalm in the biblical Book of Psalms. The first verse attributes it to King David, the author of many Psalms. It is a hymn, beginning in English "Bless the Lord, O my soul" (KJV). J. A. Motyer of Trinity College, Bristol describes it thus: "The blend of changeless fatherly care and endless sovereign rule is the distinctive stress of this Psalm." [1] In the Greek Septuagint version of the bible, and in its Latin translation in the Vulgate, this psalm is Psalm 102 in a slightly different numbering system.

The psalm is a regular part of Jewish, Catholic and Eastern liturgies. It has been paraphrased as hymns and set to music.

bleś: בָּרַךְ [barak]: to kneel, bless

1 kneel down (so Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic): בָּרַךְ עַל־בְּרַכְיוֹ וַיִּבְרַךְ and he kneeled upon his knees 2Chronicles 6:13; יִלְפְּנֵי נְבִירָה let us kneel before Yahweh Psalm 95:6.

2. To bless God, adore with bended knees: accusative בָּרַךְ יְיָ Genesis 24:48 (J) Deuteronomy 8:10; Judges 5:2,9; 1 Chronicles 29:10,20; 2Chronicles 20:26; 31:8; Nehemiah 9:5; Psalm 16:7; Psalm 26:12; Psalm 34:2; Psalm 63:5; Psalm 103:20; Psalm 103:21; Psalm 103:22; ...

3 God blesses

- People & : things
- people bless other peoeople: priests & kings בְּשֵׁם יְיָ Deuteronomy 10:8; Deuteronomy 21:5

4. salute, greet, with an invocation of blessing (stronger than בָּרַךְ: שְׁלוֹם) בָּרַךְ בְּךָ with thee will Israel bless Genesis 48:20 (E).

5. bless, with the antithetical meaning curse (Thes) from the greeting in departing, saying adieu to, taking leave of; but rather a blessing overdone and so really a curse as in vulgar English as well as in the Shemitic cognates: 1 Kings 21:10,13; Job 1:5,11; Job 2:5,9; Psalm 10:3.

July 28, 2019

Psalm 103

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

- 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 do not forget all his benefits—
- ³ who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
- ⁴ who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
- ⁵ who satisfies you with good as long as you live
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- ⁶ The Lord works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
- ⁸ The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- ⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
- ¹⁰ He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
- ¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
- ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.
- ¹⁴ For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
- ¹⁵ As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
- ¹⁶ for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
- ¹⁷ But the steadfast love 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 to do his commandments.

¹⁹ The Lord has established his throne in the
heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.

²⁰ **Bless** the Lord, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding,
obedient to his spoken word.

²¹ **Bless** the Lord, all his hosts,
his ministers that do his will.

²² **Bless** the Lord, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Genesis 12:1-4

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹ Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will **bless** you, and make your name great, so that you will be a **blessing**. ³ I will **bless** those who **bless** you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be **blessed**."

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF EXAMEN & CONTEMPLATION

- **What word, phrase or image grabs your attention?**
- **How is the psalmist blessed? How about Sarah and Abraham? What does living as being blessed to be a blessing look like?**
- **How are you blessed? How are we as a community of faith blessed?**
- **How do the word of this story touch - our life as individuals and as the church here in Oakland - today, inviting us to the counter-cultural way of living as paying forward the ways in which we are blessed?**

The Book of Genesis is ,the first book of the Hebrew Bible and the Old Testament, is Judaism's account of the creation of the world and the origins of the Jewish people.] It is divisible into two parts, the Primeval history (chapters 1–11) and the Ancestral history (chapters 12–50).[3] The primeval history sets out the author's (or authors') concepts of the nature of the deity and of humankind's relationship with its maker: God creates a world which is good and fit for mankind, but when man corrupts it with sin God decides to destroy his creation, saving only the righteous Noah to reestablish the relationship between man and God.[4] The Ancestral History (chapters 12–50) tells of the prehistory of Israel, God's chosen people. At God's command Noah's descendant Abraham journeys from his home into the God-given land of Canaan, where he dwells as a sojourner, as does his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob. Jacob's name is changed to Israel, and through the agency of his son Joseph, the children of Israel descend into Egypt, 70 people in all with their households, and God promises them a future of greatness. Genesis ends with Israel in Egypt, ready for the coming of Moses and the Exodus. The narrative is punctuated by a series of covenants with God, successively narrowing in scope from all mankind (the covenant with Noah) to a special relationship with one people alone (Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob).

In Judaism, the theological importance of Genesis centers on the covenants linking God to his chosen people and the people to the Promised Land. Christianity has interpreted Genesis as the prefiguration of certain cardinal Christian beliefs, primarily the need for salvation (the hope or assurance of all Christians) and the redemptive act of Christ on the Cross as the fulfillment of covenant promises as the Son of God.

Tradition credits Moses as the author of Genesis, as well as the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and most of Deuteronomy, but modern scholars increasingly see them as a product of the 6th and 5th centuries BC.