

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (January 8) – Psalm 96, 97, 98, 99

These four psalms are all psalms of praise. The end of Psalm 96 also contains a confession of faith in Christ and His Second Coming. “For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth” (v. 13). The believers of the Old Testament were Christians, just as we are. They were saved by faith in Christ, for whose coming they watched and waited with joyful expectation. In fact, this is what every Christian from the time of Adam and Eve until now has done and continues to do: we wait for the coming of our Lord.

Psalm 98 tells of how nature itself—the sea, the rivers, and hills—worships the Lord. Even though creation has been subjected to futility, death, and decay because of man’s sin (Romans 8:20), the world itself yearns (Romans 8:22) for the restoration of all things and the full revelation of the kingdom of God.

Psalm 99 confesses something important about the vengeance of God. Out of love for His people, He takes vengeance upon our sinful deeds (v. 8) Even so, He remains “the God-Who-Forgives.”

Tuesday (January 9) – Psalm 100, 101, 102

Psalm 100 is also a psalm of praise, with a particular focus on the mercy of God. Psalm 101, written by David, is a prayer to God in which David promises to hate evil and punish evildoers. David was the king of Israel, entrusted by God with the civil rule of His people. God places civil rulers into positions of authority in order to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good (1 Peter 2:14). When David promises to “cut off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord,” this is nothing other than a promise to do his duty. Rulers who reward the evil and punish the righteous will be held accountable to God for their wicked stewardship.

Psalm 102 is a psalm of complaint. Complaining to God is not wicked; it is actually an act of faith. It is first of all a confession that God governs the affairs of men. When troubles assail us, God is still in charge, and that is why we should address our complaints to Him. Remember how the devil had to get God’s permission to afflict Job. God allows troubles into our lives. He does this for our correction and always for our good. And when we are troubled, we should bring these troubles to God, confessing both our sins and our faith in the mercy and lovingkindness of God. The psalmist reminds God of His promises, which is an act of faith which God loves, “You will arise and have mercy on Zion” (v. 13). “[The Lord] shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer” (v. 17).

Wednesday (January 10) – Psalm 103, 104

Psalm 103 is a prayer of praise to God for His mercies. “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” What a beautiful confession of God’s grace! Psalm 104 is a psalm of praise filled with rich and poetic imagery.

Thursday (January 11) – Psalm 105

Psalm 105 praises the eternal faithfulness of God, recounting His dealings with the people of Israel from the covenant given to Abraham to the Ten Commandments given at Mt. Sinai.

Friday (January 12) – Psalm 106

Psalm 106 continues the history of God's people, telling of His patience and long-suffering toward them during their rebellions in the wilderness and their repeated idolatry in the land of Canaan. Again and again they turned away from God into sin, and He allowed them to be afflicted in order to bring them to repentance (v. 43). Why did God forgive the Israelites again and again? Why does He forgive us? Not because we deserve it, but because of His covenant to us (v. 45), because He is merciful. This is what we confess in Luther's explanation to the First Article of the Creed: "All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any worthiness or merit in me."

Saturday (January 13) – Psalm 107

Psalm 107 is the beginning of the fifth and final subdivision of the book of Psalms. The Psalm shows the cycle of God's people as they fall into sin, are brought low, cry out in repentance, and are rescued by the mercy of God. Each cycle in the psalm ends with the refrain, "Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" In the final cycle, we hear of how troubles bring men to "their wits' end." God allows this in order to teach us to trust in Him. God uses our troubles, however terrible they seem at the time, for our eternal good.

The final portion of the psalm (vv. 33–42) tells of how God cares and provides for the righteous, even as He afflicts and brings low the wicked. This part of the psalm brings to mind the prayers of Hannah (1 Samuel 2) and Mary (Luke 1).

Sunday (January 14) – Psalm 108

In Psalm 108 David confesses His faith in God's judgment. The Lord will triumph over His enemies, even though at times they may seem secure in their pride and power. David prays, "Give us help from trouble, for the help of man is useless. Through God we will do valiantly, for it is He who shall tread down our enemies" (vv. 12–13).

David's enemies were often flesh and blood, wicked men from the surrounding godless nations, and God delivered him. But whenever foreign nations rose up as enemies of God's people, they were only being used as puppets by the true enemy of God and His people. St. Paul reminds us that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12).

God promised Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior to tread on the head of our enemy, the devil (Genesis 3:15). This promise was fulfilled by our Lord Jesus, who conquered sin, death, hell, and the devil upon His cross. Thanks be to God!