

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

PSALMS 103-106

Humans were created to be *God-centered*. Sin makes us *self-centered*. Worship *alters our center*. It moves us away from self and back to God.

Eugene Peterson writes, “Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God.”

And tonight’s chapters – Psalms 103-106 - are full of worship...

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND THREE begins, “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me...” Here’s the key to worship – it’s not how long, or how well, I worship – it’s not *quality or duration* – but *intensity*.

Am I pouring out “all that is within me...” Worship reaches deep inside. It clears out my passion and my emotion – then presents it to God.

David says, “Bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits...” What follows is God’s benefit package...

Here’re the benefits of knowing God, “Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s...” God forgives, heals, redeems, crowns, satisfies, renews...

Sign on with God... He has a very, very good benefit

package.

One comment, don't get tripped up by a misunderstanding of verse 3, **"Who heals all your diseases..."** God promised OT Israel immunity from disease, but He made promises to Israel he never made to the Church.

God promises His Church spiritual health. At times, He heals us physically – but disease-free living is not a component of His NT benefits. One day, when we get to heaven, God will heal all our diseases, but not in this life. Right now we're as subject to germs as the sinner next-door.

Verse 6 **"The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel."** Moses sat in God's dugout. He was privy to the manager's thought process. He knew God's ways. Israel sat in the bleachers and only beheld His acts. God wants us to know God's *motives*, not just His *movements*.

"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever." God is slow to anger, but there are limits to His patience.

There comes a point when God stops the sinner for his own sake.

"He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities." This is what the NT calls **"justification."**

God treats us “just-as-if-I’d” never sinned, even though I have. If I’m in Christ Jesus, God chooses to treat me as He would His own Son.

Verse 11 “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” Notice, the psalmist doesn’t say “as far as the north is from the south.” The earth is round, so you can travel north to a point, and eventually start south again.

But you can go east forever. North and south meet - not east and west.

That’s why verse 12 says God has taken our sin as far as the east is from the west. In Christ our sin is gone once and for all – and forever!

“As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.” Sweep the floor, and you're reminded of how frail and fleeting we really are.

As the rock group Kansas use to sing, “All we are is dust in the wind.” The funeral chant sums us up, “Dust to dust - ashes to ashes.”

God knows we’re hairballs – yet He pities us. He’s full of compassion.

Often, God expects less from us than we do from ourselves. When we sin or fail we can beat ourselves up. We’re tempted to throw in the towel. But God doesn’t give up on us.

God works with dust.

Add the water of the Spirit to dust and it becomes moldable clay.

Verse 15 “As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.” Men are fleeting. God’s mercy is forever.

“The LORD has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, you ministers of His, who do His pleasure. Bless the LORD, all His works, in all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!”

The psalmist calls from strong to weak - *from angel, to leader, to works, to his own soul* - to bless the Lord. You can never praise Him too much!

Psalms 103 speaks of God’s mercy, while **PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR** mentions God’s might. It’s a psalm of creation. And the writer lays out creation in the order Moses does in Genesis 1.

“Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great:

You are clothed with honor and majesty, Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment...” The first burst of God’s

creative word was light!

“Let there be light and there was light.” A literal reading of the Hebrew puts it more abruptly, “Light be, light was.” God spoke and light shined.

Notice, God covers Himself with light. He wears it like a shirt or a coat.

1 Timothy 6:16 tells us Jesus “dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see...” To mortal eyes Jesus is like 10,000 suns.

Light *reveals* and *conceals*. One look directly at the sun and it'll blind you. Yet living in the sunshine allows us to see the rest of life clearly.

There's much we don't know about God, but without God we know nothing at all! He covers Himself in light, but His light uncovers truth.

The psalmist continues “Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.

He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, Who makes the clouds His chariot, Who walks on the wings of the wind...” Earth's hydrological system is an amazing feat of divine engineering.

54 trillion, 460 billion tons of water is suspended in the atmosphere as vapor. Jesus not only walks on water, but He hangs it in the thin air.

“Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire. You who laid the foundations of the earth, so that it should not be moved forever...” Whatever God builds He builds it to

last!

God is not an auto manufacturer who builds the car to break down in 7 years. What God builds is never shaken... Including a new life for you...

“You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.” The psalmist refers to the flood of Noah’s day.

“At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. They went up over the mountains; they went down into the valleys, to the place which You founded for them. You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, that they may not return to cover the earth.”

At the flood water gushed upwards from subterranean reservoirs, or rushed downward from collapsing clouds. Swelling waters completely covered the Earth until they receded to their current boundaries.

Verse 10 “He sends the springs into the valleys, they flow among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. By them the birds of the heavens have their home; they sing among the branches. He waters the hills from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine that makes glad the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart.” God waters the Earth and produces abundant vegetation - *wine for the heart, oil for the skin, bread for the body.*

“The trees of the LORD are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted, where the birds make their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. The high hills are for the wild goats; the cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.” In Israel today the rock badgers still roam the cliffs.

In places like En Gedi the wild goats are a familiar sight.

“He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knows its going down.

You make darkness, and it is night, in which all the beasts of the forest creep about. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from God. When the sun arises, they gather together and lie down in their dens.” In OT times man-eating lions roamed the Israeli countryside.

Samson was attacked by a lion near the vineyards of Timnah, and killed it with his bare hands. David killed a lion defending his father’s sheep. 2Samuel 23:20 mentions one of David’s mighty men. His name was Benaiah. He “killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day.”

Lions once roamed the holy land... *no lying!*

“Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the evening. O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all.”

The psalmist is blown away by the wonders of God’s creation.

There’s no way life and nature resulted by chance occurrences of accidental circumstances. British philosopher, Malcolm Muggeridge called Darwinian evolution, “One of the

stupidest theories of Western life.”

I’ve heard it put, “If evolutionary adaptability works - how come mothers still only have two hands?” Surely an extra hand would’ve evolved by now.

Every day more and more evidence is presented to support the idea of Intelligent Design – *the creation had to have a Creator*. The day is coming when educated men will look at the idea of evolution the way we now view the flat earth theory. We’ll see it as the naïve assumption of biased men.

Next, the psalmist makes an amazingly accurate scientific statement, “The earth is full of Your possessions - this great and wide sea, in which are innumerable teeming things, living things both small and great.”

How does a man, living in the 11th century BC, who had only seen the ocean from a visit to the beach – had probably never left port - yet He somehow knew the seas contained “innumerable teeming things.”

David lived long before Jacque Cousteau and National Geographic Specials. He’s obviously writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 26 “There the ships sail about; there is that Leviathan which You have made to play there.” Throughout the Scriptures, Leviathan, the sea serpent, is a symbol of Satan. But the psalmist may’ve had in mind an actual sea creature – perhaps a prehistoric, lizard-like plesiosaur.

This is provocative. If the psalmist and plesiosaur were contemporaries it would mean the earth is not as old as evolutionist’s claim.

In 2006 soldiers found a beached animal in far-eastern Russia. In 1977 Japanese fishermen pulled up a decomposing carcass off New Zealand.

Both discoveries were hailed as possible modern-day plesiosaurs.

Notice in contrast to the survival of the fittest, verse 27 teaches nature depends on God for survival. “These all wait for You, that You may give them their food in due season. What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good. You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.”

Every living creature depends on God for the air they breathe - and their ability to breathe it. God determines survival not evolution.

“You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth.” In Genesis 1:2 the Spirit of God hovers over the waters as God begins His six days of creative work. It could be a gap of time exists between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 – during which the original creation was marred by Satan’s fall. In verse 2 God recreates the earth for our habitation. Here the psalmist speaks of creation as *renewal*.

He says of God, “You renew the face of the earth.”

Verse 31 “May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in His works. He looks on the earth, and it trembles; He touches the hills, and they smoke.” All the folks in Tennessee and North Carolina will be happy to know the Bible here refers to the “Smokey Mountains.”

“I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the LORD. May sinners be consumed from the earth, and the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD!”

The Hebrew word for “Praise the LORD!” is pronounced the same in every language, “Hallelujah!” It’s the universal word for praise.

In Psalm 104 God is seen as the **Creator of nature**. In **PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE** He is portrayed as the **Creator of a nation**.

Psalms 105 and 106 provide a history of the nation Israel. And what better way to remember history than to set it to music?

This is still an effective means of teaching. There’s a clever website, “songsforteaching.com.” Here’s a way to learn about the north-central states. “Nebraska, I got a shiver. The state has more miles of river.”

Well, the psalmist takes Hebrew history and turns it into a song.

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! 1Chronicles 16 is a psalm of thanks written by David when he brought the Ark to Jerusalem. It splices together two other psalms. The second half is *Psalm 96*. The front half constitutes the first fifteen verses of *Psalm 105*. In the Psalms the authors are anonymous, but according to 1Chronicles this was written by David.

Its interesting David is redoing a psalm. Some songs deserve to be re-recorded. I think some sermons need to be re-taught again and again.

“Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD!

Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore!

John Newton wrote a short refrain that goes so well with the psalmist’s thoughts, “Weak is the effort of our heart, and cold our warmest thought; but when we see Thee as Thou art, we’ll praise Thee as we ought.”

Remember, worship is the interruption of our self-centeredness.

We can go through life in a self-obsessed fog if we’re not careful – where all we see is ourselves. We need to think and talk and seek after God. “*When we see Thee as Thou art, we’ll praise Thee as we ought.*”

We’re to seek His face, and remember His works.

“Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, O seed of Abraham His servant, you children of Jacob, His chosen ones!” Here the psalmist begins the history of Israel.

God made a covenant with Abraham, his son Isaac, and his grandson Jacob (or Israel), and then to Jacob’s 12 sons – the 12 tribes of Israel.

And remember God’s covenant with Abraham. As we talked about this morning the Abrahamic Covenant is one of the

most strategic in the Bible.

It includes three promises: a chunk of land, a nation from Abraham's loins, and from that nation salvation will come to the world. Here's the shorthand version: **land, nation, blessing** – or **sod, seed, salvation...**

Verse 7 **“He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth.**

He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac, and confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant...” Notice the duration of God's covenant...

“Everlasting!” Despite foreign policy efforts, God's ancient agreement with Abraham is still the guiding principle in Middle East negotiations.

As far as the God in heaven is concerned the terms haven't changed.

And here the parameters of the agreement are remembered.

“Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan as the allotment of your inheritance...” Understand the land of Canaan never belonged to the Palestinians, nor ultimately did it belong to the Jews.

Throughout the Bible, God calls Samaria and Judea **“My Land.”** The land belongs to God and He chose to give it to Abraham or his heirs.

And this is agreed upon by both Jews and Muslims alike.

The difference is their interpretation of Abraham's heirs. Muslims pray to "the God of Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac" – not "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Here's the bottom line in the Middle East conflict – 280,000,000 Muslims misinterpret Abraham's family tree.

As far as God is concerned Ishmael is an illegitimate son. Isaac was the promised son. He and his descendents are the heirs of the covenant.

God promises Abraham the **land**, then a **nation** – *sod* and *seed*.

Verse 12 "When they were few in number, indeed very few, and strangers in it." When Isaac took his family to Egypt just 70-plus people went with him. They were an inconsequential caravan.

"When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people, He permitted no one to do them wrong; yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm." God saved Sarah from the pharaoh's lustful clutches.

In a similar story He saved Isaac's wife, Rebekah, from the Philistines.

The psalmist recounts other examples of God's deliverance...

"Moreover He called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread. He sent a man before them – Joseph - who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, he was laid in irons. Until the time that his word came

to pass, the word of the LORD tested him.”

But Joseph passed the test with flying colors. He remained faithful to God... before Potiphar... before his seductive wife... in the royal prison...

Finally, “The king sent and released him, the ruler of the people let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions, to bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his elders wisdom.”

“Israel also came into Egypt...” There was a region-wide famine, and Israel’s lack of faith in God’s provision sent him packing to Egypt.

The move was supposed to be temporary, but... “And Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham.” They stayed in Egypt over 400 years.

In Egypt “(God) increased His people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies. He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal craftily with His servants.” The Pharaoh had favored Joseph, but succeeding generations of Egyptians made slaves of his descendents.

Finally God heard their cries and “He sent Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen. They performed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they did not rebel against His word. He turned their waters into blood, and killed their fish. Their land abounded with frogs, even in the chambers of their kings.” The Egyptians turned down the covers at night and frogs filled their bed. It was *toad*-al torture. The Egyptians just wanted to *croak*.

Remember, the pharaoh came to Moses and told him (*probably with a frog in his throat*) that he would set the Hebrews free, but he relented.

So God kept up the pressure. Verse 31 **“He spoke, and there came swarms of flies...”** Think of a picnic in Macon on a hot summer day.

“And lice in all their territory...” And this wasn’t just head lice you could treat with medicated shampoo. This was nasty, itchy, whole-body, blood-sucking lice. This was a *louse-y* predicament for the Egyptians to be in.

Verse 32 **“He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.”** Thunderstorms complete with huge hailstones and lightning strikes.

“He struck their vines also, and their fig trees, and splintered the trees of their territory. He spoke, and locusts came, young locusts without number, and ate up all the vegetation in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.” Yet despite 9 different plagues the hard-hearted and stiff-necked pharaoh refused to capitulate – until God pulled out trump card...

“He also destroyed all the firstborn in their land, the first of all their strength.” God considered Israel His firstborn. Since the Egyptians had taken God’s firstborn from Him, He would take their firstborn from them.

Yet God protected everyone who had faith in His word. In homes where blood was applied to the doorposts death passed over, and the firstborn was spared. But the pharaoh’s stubbornness cost him his own son.

“(God) also brought them out with silver and gold, and there was none feeble among His tribes.” Israel got parting gifts from their captors. “Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them had fallen upon them.”

He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light in the night.

The people asked, and He brought quail, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven (the manna). He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it ran in the dry places like a river. For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant...” God’s covenant was in force.

“He brought out His people with joy, His chosen ones with gladness.

He gave them the lands of the Gentiles, and they inherited the labor of the nations...” But notice God saves so we can serve... “That they might observe His statutes and keep His laws. Praise the LORD!”

Psalm 105 describes **God’s treatment of Israel** - now **PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND SIX** describes **Israel’s treatment of God**...

And here is where it all turns ugly. As the previous psalm described *God was faithful to His people*. In contrast *Israel was faithless to God*.

Psalm 106, “Praise the LORD! Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can declare all

His praise? Blessed are those who keep justice, and he who does righteousness at all times!

Remember me, O LORD, with the favor You have toward Your people; Oh, visit me with Your salvation, that I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, that I may glory with Your inheritance.” But here is where the history turns sour...

“We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders; they did not remember the multitude of Your mercies, but rebelled by the sea - the Red Sea.” The mixed multitude wanted to retreat to Egypt.

Fear was easier than faith. Turning back – not pressing forward – seemed to be the prudent move... It still seems that way...

Yet it's never true. God wants us to *trust Him* not *tempt Him*.

“Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power known. He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it dried up; so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

He saved them from the hand of him who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. The waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left.” Egypt drowned as the sea folded up.

“Then they believed His words; they sang His praise.” But their faith was short-lived. Verse 13, “They soon forgot His works; they did not wait for His counsel...” Israel fell victim

to two sins... unbelief and forgetfulness. And it's interesting how one feeds the other.

Forget what God did in the past, and you'll be less inclined to trust Him in the future. Faith has a good recall... it never forgets God's faithfulness.

John Bunyan wrote in a classic book called "Pilgrim's Progress." It's an allegory of the challenges every Christian faces in this life. And guess where Bunyan says Christian experienced his severest struggle...

He writes, "In a narrow passage just beyond Forgetful Green.

Indeed that place is the most dangerous place in all these parts. For, if at any time the pilgrims meet with any fall it is when they forget what favors they have received." The most place along the path with that's most dangerous for the Christian... *is just beyond Forgetful Green.*

Once you forget God's past faithfulness you're headed for failure.

They forgot God's works, and "lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tested God in the desert. And He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul." God filled their belly, but sent leanness to their soul. *Physical fullness is no substitute for spiritual emptiness.*

Better to be lean physically, but filled with the Holy Spirit.

"When they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD, the earth opened up and swallowed Dathan, and covered the faction of Abiram." Church members criticize

church leaders for various reasons... Sometimes the criticism is legitimate.

At other times it's based on false accusation or biased speculation.

And there are times when it's grounded in sheer jealousy.

Over the years some of my most vocal critics have been men that God called to be pastors themselves, but for whatever reason they shirked God's calling – and they vented their angst and discontentment and frustration on me. I'm doing what they knew they should be doing.

You see this phenomenon at the Braves game. The bleacher bum who screams at the shortstop for making an error always wanted to play ball himself, but he lacked the wherewithal or ability, or he never tried. So rather than do, it's just easier to criticism the person who does.

In reality he's jealous of the person who's living out his dream.

Dathan, Abiram, and Korah were jealous of Moses and Aaron. They questioned how so much authority was invested in two men...

In their eyes, Moses took way too much upon himself.

As it turns out, that's not how God sees leadership...

Throughout the Bible God lays His hand on one man or a few men - and uses them to lead His people... not in a vacuum – not without accountability - but not by committee either. God uses men like Moses to lead His people.

And on that day in the desert, God left no room for

ambiguity or debate over this important issue. Notice how God deals with Moses' critics...

“A fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.”

As Donald Trump would say, **“You're fired.”** As if that wasn't enough the ground also opened up and swallowed the insubordinate families.

Verse 19 **“(The Hebrews) made a calf in Horeb, and worshiped the molded image. Thus they changed their glory into the image of an ox that eats grass.”** Why does he say they changed **“*their* glory?”**

It was God they represented with the image of an ox. Understand, they changed their glory into an ox because humans bear God's image.

Ultimately how we see God is how we'll see ourselves.

“They forgot God their Savior, Who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, awesome things by the Red Sea.

Therefore He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath, lest He destroy them.” God spared Israel because of Moses' intercession.

And think a few weeks earlier they tried to strip him of his leadership...

In the end they were glad they failed. Understand the man who follows God won't always be understood or popular. His approval rating will dip. You can't follow God and always please the crowd... But in a crisis you want a man with faith

and passion who loves people, and knows God.

Verse 24 “Then they despised the pleasant land (the land of Canaan – the land flowing with milk and honey); they did not believe His word, but complained in their tents, and did not heed the voice of the LORD.

Therefore He raised up His hand in an oath against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness, to overthrow their descendants among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands. They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices made to the dead.” They worshipped idols, and conducted séances. God’s people engaged in occult activity.

“Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds, and the plague broke out among them. Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stopped.” Phinehas the priest saw a Hebrew take a Moabite woman into his tent. They were hooking up in direct defiance to God’s commands, *and thought nothing of it... just friends with benefits.*

Phinehas grabbed a javelin and turned them into shishkibobs.

“And that was accounted to him for righteousness to all generations forevermore.” God was pleased with Phinehas’ righteous zeal.

“They angered Him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses on account of them; because they rebelled against His Spirit, so that he spoke rashly with his lips.” Moses got angry with his ungrateful people. He was rash. He struck the rock when he should’ve spoken.

But notice the point leaders are not immune to God’s

judgment.

God holds both the leaders and the people accountable.

“They did not destroy the peoples, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them, but they mingled with the Gentiles and learned their works; they served their idols, which became a snare to them.”

Canaanite society was one of the most morally perverse and spiritually polluted cultures to ever appear on planet earth. God raised up Israel as an instrument of His judgment. His desire was to wipe their perversion off the face of the planet and from the memory of men.

But Israel failed to take the radical action God commanded. Rather than kill the inhabitants of the land - they “mingled” and made alliances.

And tragically, the Israelis were corrupted by the evil they tolerated.

Which is how evil often works... what you tolerate in others usually comes home to roost in you. It's reverse evangelism.

Verse 37 “They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan...” They adopted the pagan's child sacrifice. This happens today when churches tolerate abortion.

“And the land was polluted with blood. Thus they were defiled by their own works, and played the harlot by their own deeds. Therefore the wrath of the LORD was kindled against His people, so that He abhorred His own inheritance. And He

gave them into the hand of the Gentiles, and those who hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

Many times He delivered them; but they rebelled in their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.” Over and over the cycle was repeated. They sinned. God judged. They repented. God saved. They sinned...

“Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry; and for their sake He remembered His covenant...” Notice the power of God’s covenant. God’s plan to redeem us is relentless. Nothing can stand in the way of His covenant.

“And (God) relented according to the multitude of His mercies. He also made them to be pitied by all those who carried them away captive.” Once again, God has mercy on them even in exile.

“Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the Gentiles, to give thanks to Your holy name, to triumph in Your praise.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting!

And let all the people say, "Amen!" Hallelujah! “Praise the LORD!”