

The Lords Redeemed

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[0 : 0 0] But if it could, for a short while, and with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the book of Psalms, Psalm 107, the book of Psalms, Psalm 107, and we read again in verses 1 to 3.

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever, that the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble, and gathered in from the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south, and so on.

The book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, it has often caused a lot of interest because there's an element of mystery to it. You'll remember that the Apostle John, he received a revelation from the Lord whilst he was exiled on the Greek island of Patmos.

And that revelation contained a vision of heaven in which John saw, he saw the throne of heaven, and he saw the Lamb of God seated upon the throne.

And John said that on each side of the throne there were four living creatures. And John describes, he says that surrounding this throne there were 24 elders and they were all clothed in white robes and they were crowned on their heads.

[1 : 4 0] And he says that these 24 elders, they fell down before the Lamb who was seated upon the throne and they worshipped him. But then John says that standing before the throne and before the Lamb, he says that he saw a great multitude, that no man could number. And this multitude says they were all clothed in white robes and they have been gathered from north, south, east and west.

They are gathered from every nation, tribe, tongue, people and language. And as they stand before the throne, John says that they are worshipping. They are saying to the Lord, salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.

But you know I love that moment in Revelation chapter 7 when one of the 24 elders asks John about this multitude that's gathered in heaven. And the elder asks, he says, who are these clothed in white robes and where have they come from?

And John says to him, sir, you know. And then it's almost as if the elder is saying yes, these are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

They are the Lord's redeemed. They are the Lord's redeemed and they have been redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb who sits upon the throne. And you know the elder, he says then to John, that's why they're before the throne of God.

[3 : 0 8] That's why they serve him day and night in his temple. Because the Lamb who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence and they will hunger no more, neither thirst any more, the sun shall not strike them by day, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd and he will guide them to springs of living water and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

But the question, who are these clothed in white robes and where have they come from? They are the Lord's redeemed. They are the Lord's redeemed.

And you know that's the question I want us to ask this evening as we consider the words of Psalm 107. Who are these clothed in white robes and where have they come from?

And I want us to ask that question because Psalm 107 answers that question. That those who are standing in glory tonight and those who will stand in glory, us, we are the Lord's redeemed.

And we have been redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ. And you know it's no wonder the Psalmist, he opens with this praise or this exhortation for all of the Lord's people to praise God for he is good for still his mercy is lasting being.

[4 : 34] And we are to praise God tonight and thank him that the Lord's redeemed. We have been freed from the hand of the enemy. We've been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. And this is all because the Lord has demonstrated as the Psalmist says, he has demonstrated his steadfast, unfailing, unchanging, covenant love towards us in the Person of Jesus Christ.

And because of this, the time is says, like the redeemed of the Lord say so. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. In other words, let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story about how they have been clothed in white robes and where they have come from.

Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story. And you know, that's what Sam 107 is all about. Sam 107 is the testimonies of the Lord's redeemed.

And what Sam 107 emphasizes to us is that the Lord's redeemed, they have been gathered, as it says in verse three, gathered from all the lands from North, South, East and West.

They've been gathered from all different directions, all different backgrounds, all different upbringings, all different walks of life. And yet what they all have in common is that they have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

[5 : 54] And you know, as we walk through this Psalm, we'll hear four different testimonies. And each one of them testifies to the kind of person the Lord redeems.

And so the kind of person the Lord redeems, the first kind of person that the Lord redeems, the Psalmist says, is the person in pleasure. Look at verses four to nine.

He says, some wandered in desert waste finding no way to a city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul faded within them. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them from their distress.

He led them by a straight way till they reached a city to dwell in. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of men, for he satisfies the longing soul and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

With each testimony of the Lord's Redeem, there is this beautiful structure that emerges and we'll see it more and more as we go on. Because what you can see is, even as we read the Psalm, you can see that there are words and there are phrases which have repeated throughout this Psalm that's highlighted to us this progression from sin to salvation.

[7 : 11] And the structure, as you can see, it's very, very simply problem, petition, praise. Problem, petition, praise. And so the testimony of the person in pleasure, it begins with the problem.

We're told in Marshpoa, some wandered in desert waste finding no way to a city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.

The problem for the person in pleasure is that they're wondering in a wasteland. They're seeking the pleasures of this world, but they find no satisfaction.

They have no rest. They have no city to dwell in. They're restless and they're lacking. As it says in verse 5, they're hungry and they're thirsty. They find nothing to satisfy their needs and the desire of their soul.

And the problem for the person in pleasure is that they're just like the prodigal son. They've left the father's house and they've left it in exchange for prodigal and reckless living.

[8 : 14] And they're feasting upon the pleasures of the world and all that the world has to offer. But what every redeemed prodigal comes to realise is that the world promises so much, but it produces so little.

The world promises us so much, but it produces so little. These things don't satisfy. They don't bring fulfillment. They don't bring that through lasting happiness. And the result is that their soul faints within them.

And when they come to their senses and they reach this end point, and every prodigal in the past has done, what do they do? They cry to the Lord. And so the problem becomes a petition.

And that's what we see in verse 6. Then they cry to the Lord in their trouble and He delivered them from their distress. He led them by a straight way till they reached a city to dwell in.

The moment of commitment and change in the life of one of the Lord's redeemed is when they earnestly cry to the Lord for mercy. And they cry to the Lord because they've reached the end of themselves.

[9 : 21] They earnestly cry to the Lord because they see that there's nowhere else to go. My friend, the person in pleasure earnestly cries to the Lord because they know that the pleasures of this world will not bring them the satisfaction they're seeking.

And by crying to the Lord, the person in pleasure realises that the Lord alone provides lasting satisfaction. And that the Lord alone will lead them away from the broad road through the narrow gate and on to the narrow path.

The Lord will lead them in a straight way. The straight way where there are boundaries. But the boundaries are there for, not for persecution. The boundaries are always set for protection.

They're in place not to make us feel that we're losing out. The boundaries are there to make us realise that we're loved. And the response to such love is praise.

Problem, petition, praise. Let's say some worship. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of men. For he satisfies the longing soul and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

[10 : 35] I friend, as someone who is the Lord's redeemed, if you were once the person in pleasure, then you ought to thank the Lord tonight for his steadfast covenant love and his wondrous works to the children of Adam.

That's what the word men means. Adam. He has brought you out of Adam into Christ. And in doing so, he has satisfied the longings of your soul and he has filled your mouth as the psalmist says.

He has filled your mouth with good things. Now friend, the kind of person the Lord redeems is the person in pleasure. But secondly, the kind of person the Lord redeems is the person in prison.

The person in prison. Look at verse 10. He says, Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, prisoners in affliction and in irons.

For they had rebelled against the words of God and spurned the counsel of the Most High. We're told that the problem for the person in prison is that they're in bondage.

[11 : 44] They're in chains and they're in darkness. And what's interesting is that the imagery which the psalmist is using here is the imagery of exile. Because one of the punishments which God inflicted upon us people because of the rebellion, one of the punishments was exile and imprisonment where they were sent out to a foreign land and even imprisoned there.

And that's what we see throughout the Bible. Now the testimony of the Lord's redeemed is that we were once in prison. We were in darkness. We were in the shadow of death.

We were in a dungeon because of our sin and our rebellion. And you know that was the experience of our first parents Adam and Eve. They were created in God's image and likeness.

They were created to glorify God, to enjoy him forever by living for him and worshiping him. But when Adam fell from that perfect estate, he did as the psalmist says here, he rebelled against the word of God and he spurned the counsel of the Most High.

And as a result Adam and Eve were, they were sent out of the Garden of Eden. They were driven out because of their sin and rebellion. They were exiled out of the Garden. And the same was true for the Israelites.

[13 : 00] They were prisoners in Egypt. They were prisoners in Babylon. Because in the land of Egypt, they were in the house of bondage. That's where they were. They were prisoners in affliction and hard labor.

They were oppressed by Pharaoh who would not let his people go. And in the foreign land of Babylon, the people of Israel, they were exiled there because of the rebellion against God's word.

They had ignored the prophets. They refused to repent and turn from their sin. They continued to worship idols and bow down to them. And so what does God do? He drives them out.

He exiles them out into a place of bondage. Under the rule of a foreign king. You know the Lord's people, they remain in their prison.

They remain in their slavery and exile. Whether it was in Egypt or in Babylon or in Adam. They remain there until their problem became a petition.

[13 : 59] And that's what we see secondly. Problem petition, verses 13 and 14. Then they cry to the Lord in their trouble. He delivered them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death.

And burst their bonds apart. When they cry to the Lord in exile and in bondage, the Lord sent him free. The Lord delivered them from the hand of the enemy.

He delivered them. And you know the word delivered, it's the same word as saved or redeemed or salvation. That's what it means to experience salvation.

It means to be delivered from bondage and slavery and sin. It's to be redeemed, to be set free by the payment of a ransom price. It's to be saved and rescued from the darkness and the shadow of death.

And the shackles of sin. I think that's why we're called the Lord's redeemed. Because we've been saved, we've been rescued, we've been redeemed. We've been delivered by the one they named salvation.

[15 : 03] That's what they said about Jesus. Call him Jesus. Call his name salvation. Why? Because he will save his people from their sins. He will redeem them.

He will pay the ransom price. My friend, we are the Lord's redeemed. Which means that we're not our own. We've been bought at a price.

We've been brought from darkness to light. From death to life. From the dungeon to liberty, we've been delivered. We've been saved from sin. We've experienced salvation.

We've been redeemed at our cost. And what our cost was, it cost the Lamb of God his own life in order to redeem us and gather us to himself.

And it's because the Lord has heard our petition and redeemed us and saved us. And we are being, it's because of that, that we're being urged to respond in praise. Twice as in March 15.

[16 : 05] Let him thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of men, for he shatters the doors of bronze and cuts into the barge of Ireland.

And you know these words, they always remind me of Charles Wesley's hymn. And cannot be that I should gain. Charles Wesley, he wrote about the wonder of God's redemption in Jesus Christ.

But one particular verse, which I'm sure you're very familiar with, in that verse, Charles Wesley wrote from his own experience. He wrote about being a sinner in bondage and in exile.

And for the Lord's, he describes the Lord's redeemed in prison. And Charles Wesley says, that's the kind of man I was. That's the kind of man I was.

And you remember what he wrote, he said, long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bowed in sin and nature's night. By night, if used a quickening ray, I woke the dungeon, flamed with light.

[17 : 06] My chains fell off, my heart was free. I rose, went forth and followed thee. My friend, who are these clothed in white robes?

And where have they come from? They are the Lord's redeemed. And the kind of person the Lord redeems, this is the amazing thing. The kind of person the Lord redeems is the person in pleasure, the person in prison.

And then thirdly, the kind of person the Lord redeems is the person in pain. The person in pain, look at verse 17, somewhat fools through their sinful ways.

And because of their iniquities suffered affliction, they loathed any kind of food and they threw near to the gates of death. The third testimony that we're given here, that the psalmist says that the problem for some people before they are the Lord's redeemed is that they're in pain.

And they're in pain and they're suffering affliction because of their sinful ways. Their sinful actions have brought suffering and sadness into their home and into their family.

[18 : 18] But the psalmist makes clear that their pain is self-inflicted. And the more that they continue in their self-inflicted pain, the closer they are to death.

And you know, in the communities that we live, and the island that we're part of, and the families that we belong to, well aware of the self-inflicted pain that is in homes and families.

Where there is so much heart and heartache and heaviness because of addiction to alcohol, to drugs, or to gambling. And sad to say I'm sure we all have someone in our family who's addicted to something that is destroying their life and maybe the lives of those around them.

Because that's what it does. It destroys homes. It tears apart marriages. It's severed relationships. It breaks promises. And it leaves a trail of heartache.

But you know the psalmist is reminding us that they're still able to be redeemed. They're not outcasts. They're not cut off. They're not beyond hope. And they're certainly not beyond redemption.

[19 : 28] But you know what's often so difficult in these situations is that they can't see the problem. But until they do, and when they do, they will make the petition.

They will make the petition as it says in verse 19, then they cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them from their distress. He sent out His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.

The psalmist says to us that it's the word alone that will bring healing. And yes, I'm sure that alcoholics anonymous and narcotics anonymous and gamblers anonymous, they help those in need.

And they do a wonderful job and help many people with broken lives and broken experiences. But you know what this psalmist makes clear, and what the word of God is making clear, is that the word of God is the only means of bringing through lasting eternal healing.

And that's why the work of road to recovery, that's why it's so important, because its foundation is the word of God. And the word of God is sent out to those in trouble and distress in order to draw them in, and to deliver them, and heal them from their destruction, their self-destruction.

[20 : 50] And you know, I remember being told the story about a painter and decorator. He was an alcoholic for many, many years. And as you can imagine, being an alcoholic, his addiction was affecting everyone in his family.

He was still managing to work though, and he was managing to hold down a job, but his alcoholism was becoming progressively worse. But one Sunday evening he went to church, as he did, out of habit.

And during the service, the congregation, they sang Sam 34, the words we were singing early on. And as the congregation sang these words, the word of the Lord was sent out.

It was sent out into this man's heart. And the words would spoke to him so clearly with the words of Sam 34, verse 6. This poor man cried, God heard and saved him from all his distresses.

And you know those words they were like bound to his soul, because they healed him, they enabled him to turn away from his alcoholism and to seek the Lord's help.

[21 : 56] And the words of Sam 34, they were so significant to this painter that he would often write them on the wall of a house before he would wallpaper that particular wall. And it's said that when this man was in a particular house 20 years after his conversion, he was stripping the wallpaper off the wall that he had been working on 20 years earlier.

And he saw the words that the Lord had spoken to him with. Sam 34, verse 6, this poor man cried, God heard and saved him from all his distresses.

And you know in reading those words it caused him to do as the Sammet is encouraging us to do here, to praise the Lord, to praise him. Problem, petition, praise.

Verse 21, let him thank the Lord for his steadfast love. For as wondrous works to the children of men, and let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of his deeds in songs of joy.

My friend, as the Lord's redeemed, we've a lot to be thankful for. And we have good reasons to praise the Lord tonight. Because the kind of person the Lord redeems is the person in pleasure, the person in prison, the person in pain.

[23 : 14] And recently, the kind of person the Lord redeems is the person in power. The person in power. Look at verse 23. It says, some went down to the sea in ships doing business in the great waters.

They saw the deeds of the Lord his wondrous works in the deep. For he commanded and raised the stormy wind which lifted up the waves of the sea. They mounted up to heaven. They went down to the depths.

They were courage-mounted away in their evil plight. They wheeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits end. You know, the problem for the person in power which the psalmist draws attention to, the problem is their wealth.

The person who owned a ship and did business by trading cargo on the open sea, that person was wealthy. And because of their wealth and their status, they had power.

And because of their wealth and their status and their power, it was a problem. And it was a problem because like it does with many people, wealth, status and power, it gives a false sense of security.

[24 : 25] They think that they have power over their own lives. They think that they have enough money to live forever. And they think that they're loved by everyone. But as the psalmist reminds us, life isn't always plain sailing.

When the Lord brings storms into our lives, when the Lord commands the winds and the waves to beat against our big ship, a ship which sometimes we think is unsinkable.

And yet when our storm becomes so severe that the ship is like a little bottle just bobbing about uncontrollably. It's mounting as he says to the heavens and it's going down again to the depths.

It's then and only then that they're brought to their wits end. And they're made to realize that there's much more to life than wealth, status and power. And you know the wonder of it all is that in the storm, in the eye of the storm, the Lord reveals himself.

And very quickly the problem for the person in power becomes a petition for peace. Problem, petition, verse 28, then they cry to the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them from their distress.

[25 : 36] He made the storm be still and the waves of the sea were hushed. Then were they glad that the waters were quiet and he brought them to their desired heaven.

You know when I read these words, I can't help but think of the occasion when Jesus and the disciples, they were battling that storm in the sea of Galilee. The wind had risen up, the waves were pounding against their little boat.

The water was pouring into the boat, almost breaking the boat. But you remember Jesus was nowhere to be found. He was asleep in the stern of the boat. And you remember how the disciples, they went up to Jesus, trying to wake him up and they were crying to him saying, Master, do you not care?

They were perishing. Now what a question to ask Jesus, do you not care about me? And we're told that Jesus, he just awoke and he rebuked the wind and he said to the waves, peace be still.

And the wind ceased and it was this great calm. And Jesus said to his disciples, why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?

[26 : 43] But the disciples, they're filled with fear and they say to one another, who is this? That the wind and the waves obey him. But what's remarkable is that it was in the storm that Jesus revealed himself to the disciples.

And for some of us, maybe our testimony, maybe our testimony is that it took a storm in our life for us to cry out to Jesus. It took a storm in our life for us to look to Jesus and ask him for help.

It took a storm in our life for us to see the emptiness of clinging to wealth or status of power and to just humbly ask Jesus, do you not care about me?

Do you not care about me? And for those of us who were redeemed through the storm, although it may not have been pleasant at the time, you can look back tonight as the Lord's redeemed and say, well, the Lord meant it for good.

He meant it for good. And our response, like the response of all of the Lord's redeemed, is praise, problem, petition, praise.

[27 : 52] Verse 31, Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of men. Let them extol him in the congregation of the people and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

Now, the closing verses of this Psalm, they actually reiterate all the blessings which the Lord's redeemed receive. I don't want to go into them in detail because, well, we don't have time.

But they all emphasize the reversal of fortune in which the Persian in pleasure, as we saw in the first testimony, that person who finds no satisfaction in the world, they are now satisfied in the Lord.

The Persian in prison who was enslaved to sin, in the dungeon of sin, they're set free by the Lord. The Persian in pain who's self-inflicting, they're healed and restored by the Lord.

The Persian in power and encounters a storm in their life. They're in the same place because of the Lord. So all are reversal of fortune. And I think that's why the Gospel is a message of good news.

[28 : 58] Because it promises a reversal of fortune. The Lord changes our life. He transforms us. He transforms us from being lost to found, darkness to light, slavery to freedom, filthy to cleanse, rejected to accept it, hated to love, outcasts to children, storm to peace, damned to save, cursed to bless, sinner to save, death to life, dungeon to liberty, hell to heaven.

That's the testimony of the Lord's redeemed. That the Lord's arm is not shortened, that he cannot save.

He is able to save to the uttermost. And the Lord is able to redeem, as we've seen in these testimonies, He's able to redeem the Persian in pleasure, the Persian in prison, the Persian in pain, and the Persian in power.

The Lord is able to redeem anyone. And this is the wonder of it. He's able to bring anyone from sin to salvation. That's why the psalmist urges all of the Lord's redeemed to praise God, for he is good, for still his mercy's elastic being.

So who are these clothed in white robes? And where have they come from? And John, as he reminded the elder, these are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation.

[30 : 42] They have washed their robes and made them white. They are the Lord of the land. They are the Lord's redeemed. They are the Lord's redeemed.

So may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. May this be. O Lord, how gracious God, we give thanks to thee tonight for that wonderful reminder, that the Lord, one who redeems sinners such as we are, that we are bought at a price, and that we are redeemed with precious blood.

And we thank thee, O Lord, and we praise thee, all for the wonder of salvation, that the Lord, one who plucks us as brands from the burning, the Lord, one who draws us from darkness into thine own marvellous light, the Lord, one who frees us from our dungeon and our slavery, and brings us, Lord, into liberty and freedom, and help us, Lord, we pray, day by day, all to do as the psalmist exhorts us, to praise God for he is good, for still his mercy's lasting be, and help us, Lord, not only to, to bask in the beauty of what there was done in our lives, but, Lord, to tell it to others, to know that they are able to be saved, to remind them, Lord, that they are not out of the grasp of God, that he is able to save to the uttermost, he is able to draw, to draw them with cords that cannot be broken.

O Lord, remember us, then, we pray, remember our homes and our families, help us, Lord, to plead for them, that they too would be those clothed in white robes, and who have come from darkness into thine own marvellous light.

O Lord, bless us together, then, we pray, go before us, bless our fellowship, one with another afterwards, and help us, Lord, to spur one another on, to love the Lord more deeply, to walk with him more closely, and to keep our eyes firmly fixed upon him, as the author and the finisher of our faith.

[32 : 45] Cleans us, then, we pray, for Jesus' sake. Well, we bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of, the opening words of that psalm, Psalm 107, from the beginning, down to the verse marked, 8.

Praise God for he is good, for still his mercy is lasting be, let God's redeemed say so, whom he from the enemies handed free, and gathered them out of the lands from north, south, east, and west, they strayed in deserts, pathless way, no city found to rise.

Down to the verse marked, 8. Praise God for he is good, for still his mercy is lasting be, let God's redeemed say so, whom he from the enemies handed free, and gathered them out of the lands from north, south, east, and west, they strayed in deserts, pathless way, no city found to rise.

For her thirst untunger in them fits, their soul went straights, them prance, they cry unto the Lord, and he, them freeze from their distress, them also went away to war, the brightest heated guide, that they might to a city go, wherein they might abide.

O that venture the Lord would give, grace for his goodness then, and for his works of wonder done, unto the sons of men.

[36 : 24] All the same with you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, may God have mercy on you.