

19-107-4-Psalms 107: The God of the Storm

God's sovereignty, trials, faith, prayer

Ps.107:23-32, 43

Faith's testimony becomes clearest in the midst of life's storms.

### **INTRODUCTION:** (Text as Scripture Reading).

–At the start of **Psa 107** is an exhortation: “Let the redeemed say this”: *Thanks be to the Lord. (Without gratitude, we get nowhere in life, or in eternity.)*

And in **v.3**, where it says God gathers us “from east and west, from north and south,” the word *south* is literally *roar* (as in “the roar of the sea).

–In **this Psalm** about gratitude for the Lord's deliverance in our lives, we've seen Him as the God of the desert, the God of the prison, the God of melancholy, and now **the God of the storm**.

–**But why does God let us get ourselves into these messes of life?** The *short-term answer* is: **HOM.idea**. The *long-term answer* is: The calm desired haven we long for is the peace of heavenly life now and hereafter, and we come to that peace only in....

### **I. Understanding the Sovereignty of God**

#### A. Nature itself is a great teacher about God's greatness– v.23-24

(NKJV), *Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters, They see the works of the LORD, And His wonders in the deep.*

1. Years ago, when reading Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us*, I was amazed by two things:
    - a. the awesome “works of the LORD and His wonders in the deep,” and
    - b. the blindness of some scientists to the God behind such wonders.
  2. Life is often like the sea. It has wonders to reveal, but going “down to the sea in ships” is risky business. Sometimes it's smooth sailing, but there can be stormy seas that swallow ship, cargo and crew.
- B. If we fail to praise God as Maker of the marvels in marine biology, we get another chance to acknowledge Him as God of the Storm:
1. God is sovereign as Regulator of life's storms– v.25, For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves.
  2. The same familiar elements in the business of life can become the tempests that threaten to ruin life [health, money, relationships, travel]. (The highways of life can become the “high... waves” of a storm.)

**TRANS:** Contemplating God's sovereignty over the sea of life ought to

bring us *peace of mind*. God is *good*. His *infinite love* is informed by *infinite wisdom*. He always does the right thing. So, in the midst of life's business ventures, there must be a divine purpose behind our...

### **II. Weathering the Tempests of the Life**

- A. In the stormy ups and downs of life, we can lose the courage we started out with– v.26, They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. [My 1<sup>st</sup> roller coaster ride scared me silly with its jerking ups and downs; when my dad saw me feigning a smile, he slipped the conductor two more tickets and off we went again!]
- B. In the twists and turns of life, we can lose control of the balance we need for handling life– v.27, They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. (Perspective can be lost whether we're drunk with success or drunk with distress.)

**TRANS:** Faith either sinks or swims in the midst of tempestuous seas. But whether we're just on a rough ride or on the last voyage of our lifetime, true faith becomes clearest in the midst of life's storms. And our cry will be heard, when we are...

### **III. Supplicating the God of the Storm**

- A. Fair-weather prayer can be lazy. [Israel forgot God in times of safety.]
- B. Some knees that won't kneel to God in the calm, do in the storm– v.28a, Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble...
  1. The **proud prodigal had to dine with the swine.** . . .
  2. **Haughty Hagar had to be deserted in the desert.** . . .
  3. **Jonah asleep in ship had to awake in a whale's belly.** . . .
  4. **Mad Manasseh had to be bound in Babylon.** . . .
  5. **When do we cry out to the Lord with the most vigor?**
  6. **Only the afflicted and frightened sheep flee to the healing Shepherd of souls, and He brings them out of their distress.**
- C. Our desperate cry is to a God who is sovereign over the noise of life– v.29, He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.
  1. God, Who made the sea, can calm it with a word– **Mark 4:38-41**, Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don't you care if we drown?” He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is

this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" (It's God incarnate!)

2. God can quiet the human heart facing disaster [Those who survived the sinking of the London in 1866 told how Rev. Daniel Draper calmed and comforted those soon to perish by "*recommending that Pilot by Whom all might arrive safely at the Port of Heaven.*"]
- D. The world promises many calm havens of peace, but only God can guide us to the one our heart longs for— v.30, They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. (Trying to sail to that safe harbor without the Pilot of Peace fails to bring us to serenity in this life and to the true haven of Heaven in the next.)

### CONCLUSION:

–**Faith's testimony becomes clearest in the midst of life's storms— v.31-32, Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders. Our public thanksgiving is the testimony faith must offer, for it points the way for others to find their way out of the storms of life by calling on the God of the Storm.**

–Elijah Fenton's poem, "A STORM AND CALM AT SEA"

With trembling faith, with breathless prayer I on my God relied, As billow unto billow called, And deep to deep replied.	And Mercy spake in low, small voice,-- "Ye waters, peace, be still!" And billows sunk, and winds were hushed, Obedient to her will.
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Now rose we, like a leaf, on high; Now touched the solid ground; While each pale seaman gazed on each, In moveless horror bound.	And now one wide expanse of green, Save where a silvery light Of moonlight marked the angel's path Who guarded us by night.
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Then heartfelt cries were raised to heaven, Undrowned by ocean's roar; And they for mercy loudly prayed Who never prayed before.	O happy hour, when all the storms Of earth shall silent be, And our glad souls beyond those stars Shall mount, O Lord, to thee!
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– v.43, Whoever is wise, let him heed these things and consider the great love of the LORD.

### **Psa 107:23-32 (NIV)**

Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. {24} They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep. {25} For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. {26} They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. {27} They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. {28} Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. {29} He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. {30} They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. {31} Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. {32} Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders.