

Psalm 103

David's Call to Bless Yahweh for His Eternal Loyal Love ¹ and Compassion ²

A Psalm of David.

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A1 DAVID'S CALL UPON HIMSELF TO BLESS YAHWEH FOR HIS BENEFITS ARISING FROM HIS COMPASSION AND LOYAL LOVE 103:1-5

B1 Bless Yahweh and His Holy Name 103:1

- C1 {1} Bless the LORD, O my soul,
- C2 And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name.

B2 Bless Yahweh and Forget None of His Benefits 103:2

- C1 {2} Bless the LORD, O my soul,
- C2 And forget none of His benefits;

B3 David's List of Benefits from Yahweh 103:3-5

- C1 Forgiving: {3} Who pardons all your iniquities,
- C2 Healing: Who heals all your diseases; ³
- C3 Rescuing: {4} Who redeems your life from the pit,
- C4 Crowning: Who crowns you with **lovingkindness** and **compassion**;
- C5 Satisfying: {5} Who satisfies your years with good things,
- C6 Renewing: *So that* your youth is renewed like the eagle.

¹ Title - Loyal Love: Yahweh's loyal love (lovingkindness, *checed*, 2617) is mentioned four times in Ps. 103 – vv. 4, 8, 11, 17. Emphasis is added in the text.

² Title - Compassion: Yahweh's compassion is mentioned in 103:4 (*racham*, 7356 [noun]); twice in 103:13 (*racham*, 7357 [verb]); and once in 103:8 (*rachuwv*, 7349 [adjective]). Emphasis is added in the text.

³ 103:3 - all ... diseases: The obedient Old Testament saint could normally expect a disease-free life. Even Godly people like King Hezekiah, could, however, encounter mortal illness (2 Kings 20). Certainly God healed him, but his remaining years included a prideful display of his wealth to the Babylonians, earning him the prediction of his descendants being carried captive to Babylon (2 Kings 20:16-18). He also subsequently fathered Manasseh, one of the most corrupt of all Judah's kings, and the one who became the immediate cause of Judah's Babylonian captivity (2 Kings 21:11-16). Of course one cannot forget the extreme misery of Job, a righteous man who, although subsequently healed, suffered boils all over his body.

Taken in its strictest sense, this Scripture would require that man never die. We know that is not true. The ultimate healing of the body will take place in the resurrection, when mortality puts on immortality (1 Cor. 15:53)!

A2 DAVID'S DOCUMENTATION OF THE COMPASSION AND LOYAL LOVE OF YAHWEH 103:6-14

B1 His Equitable Action on Behalf of the Oppressed 103:6

C1 His Righteousness: {6} The LORD performs righteous deeds

C2 His Justice: And judgments for all who are oppressed.

B2 His Compassionate Self-Revelation to Moses and Israel on Mount Sinai 103:7-8

C1 The Recipients of His Self-Revelation 103:7

D1 To Moses: {7} He made known His ways to Moses,

D2 On behalf of Israel: His acts to the sons of Israel.

C2 The Repetition of His Compassionate Self-Revelation 103:8 (quoting Ex. 34:6)

D1 His compassion and grace: {8} The LORD is **compassionate** and gracious,

D2 His forbearance and loyal love: Slow to anger and abounding in **lovingkindness**.

B3 His Merciful Restraint in Prosecuting the Sins of Those Who Fear Him (alluding to Ex. 34:7) 103:9-12

C1 His Restraint in Prosecution: {9} He will not always strive ⁴ *with us*,

C2 His Curbing of His Anger: Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.

C3 His Mercy with Regard to Israel's Sins 103:10

D1 {10} He has not dealt with us according to our sins, ⁵

D2 Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

⁴ 103:9 - strive (*riyb*, 7378): Connotes bringing a charge in a court of law.

⁵ 103:10 - sins, iniquities: Sins (*chet* - 2399) is related to the word sin (*chatta'ah* - 2402) in Ex. 34:7. Iniquities (*avon* - 5771) is the same word used in Ex. 34:6-7 – Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; {7} who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives **iniquity**, transgression and **sin**; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." This allusion ties the whole section in with God's Self-Revelation to Moses and Israel on Mt. Sinai.

- C4 His Supreme Loyal Love toward those who Fear Him 103:11
- D1 The vertical comparison of His loyal love: *{11}* For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
- D2 The greatness of His loyal love: So great is His **lovingkindness**⁶ toward those who fear Him.
- C5 The Extent of His Forgiveness 103:12
- D1 The horizontal comparison: *{12}* As far as the east is from the west,
- D2 The complete removal of transgressions: So far has He removed our transgressions⁷ from us.

B4 His Compassion on Those Who Fear Him 103:13-14

- C1 The Illustration of His Compassion: *{13}* Just as a father has **compassion** on *his* children,
- C2 The Objects of His Compassion: So the LORD has **compassion** on those who fear Him.
- C3 The Consideration of His Compassion 103:14
- D1 *{14}* For He Himself knows our frame;
- D2 He is mindful that we are *but* dust.

⁶ 103:11 - lovingkindness (*cheched* - 2617): Usually translated *lovingkindness* (NASB) or *mercy* (KJV), Bruce Waltke translates *loyal love* (used by the present author). This use here ties it together with God's Self-Revelation in Exodus 34:6-9: Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in **lovingkindness** and truth; *{7}* who keeps **lovingkindness** for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." *{8}* Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. *{9}* He said, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession." In Ex. 34:9 Moses, like David in Ps 103, chooses to capitalize on God's loyal love, not His severity! David refers to God's loyal love (*cheched* - lovingkindness - NASB) four times in Ps 103:4, 8, 11, 17.

⁷ 103:12 - transgressions (*pesha'* 6588): This same word is used in Exodus 34:6-7 – Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; *{7}* who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, **transgression** and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." Again, this section in Psalm 103 alludes to God's Self-Revelation to Moses and Israel at Sinai.

A3 DAVID'S COMPARISON OF MAN'S TEMPORAL FRAILTY TO YAHWEH'S ETERNAL LOYAL LOVE AND DOMINION 103:15-18

B1 The Frailty of Man 103:15-16

C1 The Fragile Flourishing of Man 103:15

D1 The Brevity of Man's Life: *{15}* As for man, his days are like grass;

D2 The Fragile Beauty of Man's Life: As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.

C2 The Unmemorable Disappearance of Man 103:16

D1 His Rapid Departure: *{16}* When the wind has passed over it, it is no more,

D2 His Unremarkable Contribution: And its place acknowledges it no longer.

B2 The Eternal, Righteous, Loving Loyalty of Yahweh to Those Who Fear Him 103:17-18

C1 The Eternity of His Loyal Love: *{17}* But the **lovingkindness** of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him,

C2 The Duration of His Righteousness: And His righteousness to children's children,

C3 The Objects of His Commitment 103:18

D1 The covenant-keepers: *{18}* To those who keep His covenant

D2 The obedient: And remember His precepts to do them.

B3 The Transcendent Sovereignty of Yahweh 23:19

C1 The Site of Yahweh's Throne: *{19}* The LORD has established His throne in the heavens,

C2 The Ubiquity of His Rule: And His sovereignty rules over all.

A4 DAVID'S CALL UPON ALL CREATION TO BLESS YAHWEH 103:20-22

B1 His Call upon Angels to Bless Yahweh 103:20-21

C1 Upon Angels as Messengers 103:20

D1 The Call to the Angels: {20} Bless the LORD, you His angels,

D2 The Description of the Angels

E1 Mighty in strength, who perform His word,

E2 Obeying the voice of His word!

C2 Upon Angels as Warriors 103:21

D1 The Call to the Warriors: {21} Bless the LORD, all you His hosts,

D2 The Description of the Warriors: You who serve Him, doing His will.

B2 His Call upon Yahweh's Works to Bless Him. 103:22a

C1 The Call to All His Works: {22} Bless the LORD, all you works of His,

C2 In All Places of His Rule: In all places of His dominion;

**B3 His Call upon Himself to Bless Yahweh: Bless the LORD, O my soul!
103:22b**

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF PSALM 103

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David's Call to Bless Yahweh for His Eternal Loyal Love and Compassion

(A Psalm of David.)

- A1 DAVID'S CALL UPON HIMSELF TO BLESS YAHWEH FOR HIS BENEFITS ARISING FROM HIS COMPASSION AND LOYAL LOVE 103:1-5

- A2 DAVID'S CELEBRATION OF THE COMPASSION AND LOYAL LOVE OF YAHWEH 103:6-14

- A3 DAVID'S COMPARISON OF MAN'S TEMPORAL FRAILTY TO YAHWEH'S ETERNAL LOYAL LOVE AND DOMINION 103:15-18

- A4 DAVID'S CALL UPON ALL CREATION TO BLESS YAHWEH 103:20-22

Major Divisions of Psalm 103
Based on the Analysis of Psalm 103
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