

Psalm 105

Holy Family Year B; Easter Wednesday
Not in the Prayer of the Church

The previous psalm was one of praise and thanksgiving for creation. Now the psalmist focuses on what YHWH has done in the history of his people. Compare the other historical psalms 78, 106, and 136. The psalmist is calling the people to seek YHWH continually and to obey God's will, for they are God's chosen people.

Part One. Invitation to praise God

¹Give thanks to YHWH*, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.

²Sing to him to the sound of instruments;
tell of all his wonderful works.

³Sing Alleluia to his holy name;
let the hearts* of those who seek YHWH rejoice.

⁴Seek YHWH and his strength;
seek his presence continually.

⁵Remember the wonderful deeds he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

⁶offspring of his servant Abraham,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

⁷YHWH is our God.

It is he who governs the whole world.

You, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend.

– Isaiah 41:8

Part Two. The patriarchs

The word 'covenant' in the following verses is used in the Priestly sense of a commitment made by God, rather than in the Deuteronomist sense of a bi-lateral alliance.

⁸He is mindful of his covenant* forever,
of the word that he gave, for a thousand generations,

⁹the covenant* that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,

¹⁰which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant*,

¹¹saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your lot, your inheritance.' [Genesis 15:18]

YHWH was gracious to them and had compassion on them; he turned toward them,
because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

– 2Kings 13:23

I will choose among their descendents
the heads of the stock of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

– Jeremiah 33:26

The patriarchs

Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug.
Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many.

– Isaiah 51:1-2

Jesus' followers are the beneficiaries of God's promise to the patriarchs. See Romans 4; 9:6-9; Galatians 3:16-18; 26-29. However, we must heed the words of the Baptist:

Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

– Matthew 3:9

**¹²When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in the land,
¹³wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people,
¹⁴he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account,
¹⁵saying, 'Do not touch my anointed* ones; do my prophets no harm.'**

YHWH protected Abram in Egypt (see Genesis 12:10-20), and in Gerar (see Genesis 20:1-8). He also protected Isaac in Gerar (see Genesis 26:1-11).

Part Three. The Descent into Egypt

**¹⁶He summoned famine against the land,
and took away their sustenance.
¹⁷He had a man sent ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
¹⁸His feet were restrained with fetters,
his neck was put in a collar of iron;
¹⁹until what he had said came to pass,
and he was vindicated by the word of YHWH.
²⁰The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free.
²¹He made him lord of his house,
and ruler of all his possessions,
²²to instruct his officials at his pleasure,
and to teach his elders wisdom.**

The Joseph saga is found in Genesis 37-50.

**²³Then Israel came to Egypt;
Jacob lived as an alien in the land of Ham. [Genesis 46-47]
²⁴And YHWH made his people very fruitful,
and made them stronger than their foes,
²⁵whose hearts* he then turned to hate his people,
to deal craftily with his servants. [Exodus 1]**

Part Four. Moses and seven plagues

When we compare this with the account in the Book of Exodus we notice that flies and gnats are combined, and pestilence and ulcers are not mentioned. Compare Psalm 78:44-51.

**²⁶He sent his servant Moses, [Exodus 3:10]
and Aaron whom he had chosen. [Exodus 4:27]**

**²⁷They performed his signs among them,
and miracles in the land of Ham.**

**²⁸He sent darkness, and made the land dark; [Exodus 10:21-29]
yet they resisted his words.**

In Exodus the defeat of the sun-god is the 9th plague. The psalmist mentions it first!

**²⁹He turned their waters into blood,
and caused their fish to die. [Exodus 7:14-25]**

**³⁰Their land swarmed with frogs,
even in the chambers of their kings. [Exodus 7:26 - 8:11]**

**³¹He spoke, and there came swarms of flies, [Exodus 8:12-15]
and gnats throughout their country.**

**³²He gave them hail for rain, [Exodus 9:13-35]
and lightning that flashed through their land.**

**³³He struck their vines and fig trees,
and shattered the trees of their country.**

**³⁴He spoke, and the locusts came, [Exodus 10:1-20]
young locusts without number;**

**³⁵they devoured all the vegetation in their land,
and ate up the fruit of their ground.**

**³⁶He struck down all the first born in their land, [Exodus 12:29-36]
the first issue of all their strength.**

Part Five. God brings Israel out of Egypt

**³⁷Then he brought Israel out with silver and gold,
and there was no one among their tribes who faltered.**

**³⁸Egypt was glad when they departed,
for dread of them had fallen upon it.**

Part Six. Wanderings in the wilderness

**³⁹He spread a cloud for a covering,
and fire to give light by night. [Exodus 13:21-23]**

**⁴⁰They asked, and he brought quails,
and gave them food from heaven in abundance. [Exodus 16:1-36]**

**⁴¹He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river. [Exodus 17:1-7]**

YHWH is faithful to his promise

Conclusion

⁴²For he remembered his holy promise,
given to Abraham, his servant.

⁴³So he brought his people out with joy,
his chosen ones with singing.

⁴⁴He gave them the lands of the nations,
and they took possession of the wealth of the peoples,

⁴⁵that they might keep his statutes
and observe his laws.

Praise YH!

Notice that in the following psalm we are shown 7 ways in which the laws are broken!