

Goodness of God; Psalm 107:1-3

1. Goodness.
 - a. The goodness of God is a vast subject to try to tackle.
 - b. There are eight definitions of this Hebrew word for "good."
 - i. The first five definitions are merry, pleasant or desirable, in order or usable (God is bringing Israel into a good land), qualitatively good or efficient (well-spoken from 1 Kings 18:24 when Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal), and pleasing or beautiful.
 - ii. The lexicon's definition of our text is **friendly or kind**.
 - iii. The last two definitions are good as to character and value and morally good.
 - iv. When we think of God being good, these last two definitions come to mind.
 - c. We will focus on the hymn's lyrics and see where they show us the goodness of God.
2. Through the fire.
 - a. "I love Your voice. You have led me through the fire. In the darkest night, you are close like no other. I've known You as a Father, I've known You as a Friend, and I have lived in the goodness of God."
 - b. I want us to notice the phrase, "You have led me through the fire."
 - i. Psalm 107:4–8 "Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted 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 man!"
 - ii. The Fire, trials, suffering, and struggling should be nothing new to us.
 - iii. 1 Peter 4:12–13 "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed."
 - iv. If suffering is part of our Christianity, then it makes sense that God would go before us.
 1. We all know the events surrounding Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego).
 2. They followed God and His law for the Israelites even in captivity.
 3. They would not bow down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar erected (of himself from the dream in chapter 2).
 4. Daniel 3:15–17 "Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king."
 5. At any time, God could have stepped in and delivered them from the furnace, but He did not.
 6. Daniel 3:18 "But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.""
 7. Some might think that God had ignored them.

8. Daniel 3:21–23 "Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace."
 9. God must have forsaken them; He must have not heard them when they told Nebuchadnezzar that their God was able to deliver them in verse 17.
 10. Or maybe God was leading them into the fire.
 11. We know the rest of the event.
 12. Daniel 3:27 "And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them."
 13. Did you hear what God said? The "fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men."
- v. The fire has no power over us!
 1. I know that is hard to believe, especially when you are in the middle of the furnace.
 2. The thoughts of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah as the guards tossed them into the furnace are hard, if not impossible, to imagine.
 3. Did they hear the dying screams of the men carrying them?
 4. Were they expecting the furnace's heat to burn them to death as they fell?
 5. Isaiah 43:2 "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you."
 - vi. So many things distract us from the power of God as He leads us through the fire.
 - vii. Just like those who told the three to bow down to the statue, people give us bad advice as we face the fire.
- c. "In the darkest night, you are close like no other."
 - i. God will never forsake us.
 - ii. Hebrews 13:5–6 "Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"
 - iii. In truth, being in the fire is for our good (Romans 8:28).
 - iv. We can always fall into the loving arms of our God as He leads us through the fire.
 - d. When we are in the fire, we live through God's goodness.
3. Your mercy never fails me
 - a. "I love You, Lord, for Your mercy never fails me. All my days, I've been held in Your hands. From the moment that I wake up until I lay my head, oh, I will sing of the goodness of God."
 - b. The biblical meaning of mercy is not easy to understand.

- i. One of the most essential qualities of God. Specifically, it designates that quality in God by which he faithfully keeps his promises and maintains his covenant relationship with his chosen people despite their unworthiness and unfaithfulness.¹
- ii. Deuteronomy 4:31 "For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them."
- iii. There are 15 Hebrew words and 12 Greek words that the writers translate as mercy.
- iv. Those words are also translated as kindness, goodness, grace, favor, pity, compassion, and steadfast love.
- v. The meaning that comes to the front is compassionate love, forgiving each other, and sparing one another in our sad condition.
 - 1. Exodus 33:19 "And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."
 - 2. Isaiah 54:10 "For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you."
 - 3. Isaiah 63:7–9 "I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old."
 - 4. God's redemption is the very heart of the meaning of mercy.
- c. God's mercy will never fail us; His promises are sure.
 - i. We are a fallen people, ruined by sinful behavior, but God's promise is for us!
 - ii. Jesus' sacrifice is for all sins for all people for all time.
 - iii. 1 John 1:8–10 "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
 - iv. We know when we have failed God.
 - 1. We may try to convince ourselves otherwise, but we know.
 - 2. We know when we are lying, when we are breaking the law, when we betray friends and family; we know.
 - 3. Verse 9 is one of the most beautiful verses written.
- d. Cry to the Lord!
 - i. Psalm 107:4–6 "Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress."
 - ii. Psalm 107:10–13 "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. So he bowed their hearts down with hard labor; they

¹ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, "Mercy," Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1440.

fell down, with none to help. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress."

- iii. Psalm 107:17–19 "Some were fools through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities suffered affliction; they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress."
 - iv. Psalm 107:23–28 "Some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on 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; their courage melted away in their evil plight; they reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits' end. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress."
 - v. Cry to the Lord, and He will deliver you!
 - vi. He will deliver you because His mercy never fails you!
4. Goodness of God.
- a. Let the redeemed of the Lord cry out the goodness of God.
 - b. He is faithful and will deliver you.
 - c. His mercy never fails you!