

## PSALM 106

*Israel's Rebelliousness and the LORD'S Deliverances.*

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (4-24-96).
- B. This is the third of these three songs which reflect on God's work, and Israel's history.  
Psa. 104 focused on what God did in creation.  
Psa. 105 focused on God's blessings on Israel, and deliverances.  
Psa. 106 focused on Israel's continual sin and rebellion in spite of God's blessings.
- C. These three "historical" psalms end the four Book, as the Jews organized them.
- D. There is no specific information in this psalm that would indicate the occasion or time that it was written. Verse 46 says "...by ALL those who carried them away captive" which would indicate that they had been carried away by several different peoples. Also, verse 47 asks the Lord to "...gather us from among the Gentiles..." which would indicate that some were still captive. Also, 1Chr. 16:34-36 reflect some of the same wording as Psa. 106:46-47. It is not possible to determine which is earlier.
- E. Coffman quotes McClaren's comments on this psalm:  
"The history of God's past is a record of continuous mercies; and mankind's record is one of continuous sin... Surely never but in Israel has patriotism chosen a nation's sins for the theme of song, or in celebrating its victories has written but one name on all of its trophies, the name of Jehovah."  
McClaren, Abraham. *Psalms*. (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1892)
- F. Fleshly Israel has been consistent in it's rebellion against God. By the first century they had essentially rejected His law and replaced it with their customs and traditional interpretations. They rejected the Messiah and His teachings, even though He continued to fulfill all of the prophecies concerning Himself. They could not deny His miracles but attributed them to Satan, and finally demanded that He be crucified. Jesus acknowledged their rejection, and pronounced His rejection of them (Mt. 23:37-39).
- G. Paul says that now a Jew is one circumcised of the heart and not of the flesh (Rom. 2:28-29), and that the circumcision of the heart is being "buried with Him in baptism..." (Col. 2:11-12). Yet, it is deplorable how many writers still refer to "Israel of God" as rebellious fleshly Israel. Paul described the "Israel of God" as those who were grafted into the cultivated Olive tree through faith (Rom. 11). Fleshly Israel was cast off in unbelief and Jews who are saved must be saved through faith and obedience as the Gentiles.
- H. Coffman divides this long psalm into twelve divisions:
  - I. Introduction (106:1-5).
  - II. Sin No. 1: In Egypt (106:6-12).
  - III. Sin No. 2: Their Murmuring for Food (106:13-15).
  - IV. Sin No. 3: Murmuring Against Moses and Aaron (106:16-18).
  - V. Sin No. 4: Worship of the Golden Calf (106:19-23).
  - VI. Sin No. 5: Rebellion of the Ten Spies (106:24-27).
  - VII. Sin No. 6: Idol Worship with the Moabites (106:28-31).
  - VIII. Sin No. 7: Rebellion at the Waters of Meribah (106:32,33).
  - IX. Sin No. 8: Israel Did Not Destroy the Peoples of Canaan (106:34,35).
  - X. Sin No. 9: Israel Did Serve Their Idols (106:36-39).
  - XI. God's Anger with His People (106:40-43).
  - XII. God's Blessings Despite Israel's Sins (106:44-47).Doxology Ending Book Four (106:48).

### THE TEXT.

**106:1** Praise the LORD!

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;

For His lovingkindness is everlasting.  
2 Who can speak of the mighty deeds of the LORD,  
Or can show forth all His praise?  
3 How blessed are those who keep justice,  
Who practice righteousness at all times!  
4 Remember me, O LORD, in *Your* favor toward Your people;  
Visit me with Your salvation,  
5 That I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones,  
That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation,  
That I may glory with Your inheritance.  
6 We have sinned like our fathers,  
We have committed iniquity, we have behaved wickedly.  
7 Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders;  
They did not remember Your abundant kindnesses,  
But rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.  
8 Nevertheless He saved them for the sake of His name,  
That He might make His power known.  
9 Thus He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up,  
And He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness.  
10 So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated *them*,  
And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.  
11 The waters covered their adversaries;  
Not one of them was left.  
12 Then they believed His words;  
They sang His praise.  
13 They quickly forgot His works;  
They did not wait for His counsel,  
14 But craved intensely in the wilderness,  
And tempted God in the desert.  
15 So He gave them their request,  
But sent a wasting disease among them.  
16 When they became envious of Moses in the camp,  
And of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD,  
17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,  
And engulfed the company of Abiram.  
18 And a fire blazed up in their company;  
The flame consumed the wicked.  
19 They made a calf in Horeb  
And worshiped a molten image.  
20 Thus they exchanged their glory  
For the image of an ox that eats grass.  
21 They forgot God their Savior,  
Who had done great things in Egypt,  
22 Wonders in the land of Ham  
And awesome things by the Red Sea.  
23 Therefore He said that He would destroy them,  
Had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him,  
To turn away His wrath from destroying *them*.  
24 Then they despised the pleasant land;  
They did not believe in His word,  
25 But grumbled in their tents;  
They did not listen to the voice of the LORD.  
26 Therefore He swore to them  
That He would cast them down in the wilderness,  
27 And that He would cast their seed among the nations  
And scatter them in the lands.  
28 They joined themselves also to Baal-peor,  
And ate sacrifices offered to the dead.  
29 Thus they provoked *Him* to anger with their deeds,  
And the plague broke out among them.

**30** Then Phinehas stood up and interposed,  
 And so the plague was stayed.  
**31** And it was reckoned to him for righteousness,  
 To all generations forever.  
**32** They also provoked *Him* to wrath at the waters of Meribah,  
 So that it went hard with Moses on their account;  
**33** Because they were rebellious against His Spirit,  
 He spoke rashly with his lips.  
**34** They did not destroy the peoples,  
 As the LORD commanded them,  
**35** But they mingled with the nations  
 And learned their practices,  
**36** And served their idols,  
 Which became a snare to them.  
**37** They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons,  
**38** And shed innocent blood,  
 The blood of their sons and their daughters,  
 Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan;  
 And the land was polluted with the blood.  
**39** Thus they became unclean in their practices,  
 And played the harlot in their deeds.  
**40** Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against His people  
 And He abhorred His inheritance.  
**41** Then He gave them into the hand of the nations,  
 And those who hated them ruled over them.  
**42** Their enemies also oppressed them,  
 And they were subdued under their power.  
**43** Many times He would deliver them;  
 They, however, were rebellious in their counsel,  
 And *so* sank down in their iniquity.  
**44** Nevertheless He looked upon their distress  
 When He heard their cry;  
**45** And He remembered His covenant for their sake,  
 And relented according to the greatness of His lovingkindness.  
**46** He also made them *objects* of compassion  
 In the presence of all their captors.  
**47** Save us, O LORD our God,  
 And gather us from among the nations,  
 To give thanks to Your holy name  
 And glory in Your praise.  
**48** Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,  
 From everlasting even to everlasting.  
 And let all the people say, "Amen."  
 Praise the LORD!

## COMMENTS.

### A. Introduction.

**[v1-5]** This introduction of praise and petition for blessing indicates who will receive God's blessings: "Blessed are those who keep justice, and he who does righteous at all times." v. 3

### B. Sin No. 1: In Egypt.

**[v6-12]** In Egypt, the people were discouraged and faith grew slowly. We often have the same problem today. We have great difficulty seeing God's blessings when we are focused on ourselves and our own problems: and this may be causing most of our problems. But the people did have enough faith to follow God's directions during the plagues, offering the Passover lambs, and keeping the feast as directed. Faith is not understanding why God tells us to do things, but to trust Him enough to do what He says without understanding.

- C. Sin No. 2: Their Murmuring for Food.  
**[v13-15]** After 6 weeks in the wilderness they ran out of food and began to murmur against God rather than ask Him for what they needed. We still do this also. We complain to others about what we want rather than go to God in Prayer to give thanks for the blessings He has given us and ask for what we need.
- D. Sin No. 3: Murmuring Against Moses and Aaron.  
**[v16-18]** The three leaders in this rebellion, Korah, Dathan and Abiram, were swallowed up by the earth which open and devoured them. The 250 leaders of Israel who followed them were destroyed by fire. In the NT we are told that all of these punishments were just and warnings to us that we should not sin like they did.
- E. Sin No. 4: Worship of the Golden Calf.  
**[v19-23]** Moses has probably already been on the Mountain for over a month. Mankind is an impatient creature. He also likes to focus on things that he can see. But God who is spirit, and living and created all things is the opposite of the image of a calf that is not alive and can do nothing. The same is true of an image of Christ today. Some who claim that the ten commandments are still in force today, do not believe the second commandment (Ex. 20:4-5).
- F. Sin No. 5: Rebellion of the Ten Spies.  
**[v24-27]** They said that the land was bountiful and filled with milk and honey as God had said, BUT, "The people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there" (Num. 13:28,31). We still hear this kind of discouragement when the work of the Lord is set before us today. It is still unbelief and rebellion.
- G. Sin No. 6: Idol Worship with Moabites.  
**[v28-31]** In Num. 25:1 we learn that "the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab." At God's command, Moses told the judges of Israel to "kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor" (Num. 25:5). When an Israelite man took a Midianite woman in the sight of the congregation, Phinehas, a priest, took a Javelin "and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel." v. 8 But 24,000 had already died from the plague (Num. 25:10-12). God does not tolerate sin in His people, though He does not usually put to death instantly today, we still suffer His wrath.
- H. Sin No. 7: At the Waters of Meribah.  
**[v32,33]** Num. 20 describes Moses striking the rock instead of speaking to it, to get water, and Moses not being able to enter the Promised Land because of it. But here we are told that it was because the people had angered him by their rebellion and quarreling about water.
- I. Sin No. 8: Israel did not Destroy Peoples of Canaan.  
**[v34,35]** In Deut. 7:1-5 God commanded Israel to completely destroy all of the people in the land, and not spare any of them, "For they will turn your sons and away from following Me to serve other gods" (v4). Israel did not do what God said and was led into idolatry by the people.
- J. Sin No. 9: Israel did Serve Their Idols.  
**[v36-40]** God commanded that the Canaanite nations be destroyed because of their wickedness. Israel spared many of them and did follow their idolatry.  
 Israel did offer their own children as sacrifices in some of the worship. These children were referred to as "innocent blood" (v. 38). This would mean that they had not inherited sin from Adam if they were innocent.
- K. God's Anger with His People.  
**[v41,42]** "And He gave them into the hand of the Gentiles.... their enemies also oppressed them..." This happened many times even during the 350 years of the judges. There was complete exile for the northern kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians in 721BC and Judah was taken into Babylonian captivity for 70 years at 606BC.

**[v43]** “Many times He delivered them; but they rebelled in their counsel...” This had been recurring for centuries during the judges.

L. God’s Blessings Despite Israel’s Sins.

This is almost a restatement of verse 43 in His delivering them many times. Several reasons are given for His mercy.

**[v47]** This is a prayer for God to bring them back from “among the Gentiles.” This seems to be referring to many nations rather than just Babylon, as some have suggested. The Assyrians did locate the northern tribes in several nations. Also the Jews may have spread through the empires of the Medes and Persians after Babylonian captivity.

**[v48]** Verse 48 seems to be a doxology at the end of Book Four: