

THE PILGRIM PSALM 107

Persecution and Pilgrims pack the drama of our history with profound meaning about the Providence of God. Give Him thanks in your own political, economic, and spiritual situation!

THANKS v1-3 “**O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!**” begins Psalm 107. Written ~2,500 years ago, it traces ancient Israelites returning from exile to the Promised Land. But it's also called the “Pilgrim Psalm” because it echoes the real-life experience of our own famous 1600s flock of freedom-seeking Christ-followers, deprived of basic human rights of religion, speech, and assembly. They are our spiritual forefathers.

TROUBLE v4-9 “**Their soul fainted within them. He led them by a straight way till they reached a city to dwell in.**” Hounded by English authorities, in 1609 non-conformist Pilgrims finally found some measure of religious freedom in Holland. Their pastor, John Robinson, was former dean of Cambridge University. He taught his growing flock of 300 to know the Bible, along with God's foundational principles of religious, economic, and civil freedom.

DELIVER v10-16 “**He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and burst their bonds apart.**” A godless culture threatened to snatch the children of the impoverished Pilgrims. After much prayer and formidable difficulty, including multiple betrayals, humiliations, and imprisonments, some Pilgrims finally set sail for the New World in Sept. 1620, hoping to escape further trials or death. The ship Speedwell leaked beyond repair. So those willing all crammed into the Mayflower, as 102 brave souls entrusted their lives to God.

WORD v17-22 “**they drew near the gates of death...He sent out His Word...and delivered them.**” Intrepid faith sustained them through a traumatic 66-day journey in tumultuous seas. Wild storms blew them far off course. Deprivations and impending winter left them in extreme danger. But their faith - determination to live out God's Word - sustained them. His plan is still being worked out. YOU can trust Him, even when dark clouds hide coming providence.

HAVEN v23-31 “**He made the storm be still... and He brought them to their desired haven.**” Some 500 miles north of their Virginia destination near the Hudson River, they had been blown to Cape Cod. They found suitable harbor near Plymouth Rock. Already-cleared land had been abandoned years before when a plague wiped out the Pawtuxet Indians. This was perhaps the only unclaimed land on the entire eastern coast, not occupied by openly hostile Indians. The purpose and providence of God is unmistakably written in our history!

PRAISE v32-38 “**Let them extol Him in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the Elders.**” 46 men crowded into the captain's cabin the 11th of Nov 1620. They had to form their own government, to replace their official charter valid only for Virginia. They wrote the Mayflower Compact, “*In the name of God, Amen!*” It describes their purpose to plant a colony for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith. This covenant to govern themselves is “the first-known document of its kind in history” and a model for more than 80 others. “**There He lets the hungry dwell, and they establish a city to live in; they sow fields and plant vineyards and get a fruitful yield.**” Half the Pilgrim community died that harsh first winter. God sent Samoset, and Squanto (a former slave, who had learned English and Christianity in Europe). They both knew English and survival. That fall in 1621, some 90 natives joined 50 pilgrims for a harvest feast, a model for our own annual celebration.

WISDOM v39-43 “**Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the LORD.**” With resolve for God's principles and recovery of free enterprise, they finally flourished. There's a plethora of fascinating detail about God's Providence in the lives of the Pilgrims, which reveal ever more layers of the steadfast lovingkindness of our faithful God. Yes, pointed persecution prompted their pilgrimage. Hardships steeled their character.

Miracles delivered them time and again. Fervent faith fueled their trust in the bounty of God's grace and truth. This is our heritage! As you pause to thank God this THANKS-giving season, pray for the Bible's principles of freedom to reign in our land. Pray for God to continue to set people at liberty through Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Pray that you trust and obey God's truth by His power within, regardless of your hardships. God prevails, all to His glory! □