

Praise for Deliverance

Key Verse: “*Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He delivered them out of their distresses.*”
—*Psalm 107:6, New American Standard Bible*

Selected Scripture:
Psalm 107:1-9

PSALM 107 BEGINS WITH the phrase, “Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good.” (NASB) How much we should thank our Heavenly Father, especially because “His lovingkindness is everlasting.” God demonstrated his love for mankind by providing his only begotten Son, “the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all.”—John 3:16,17; I Tim. 2:5,6

As a result of Jesus’ ransom sacrifice all mankind has been “redeemed from the hand of the adversary.” (Ps. 107:2, NASB) However, the restoration of mankind back into harmony with God has not yet occurred, because during the present Gospel Age a heavenly call, or invitation, has gone out for nearly two-thousand years throughout the earth, to all those willing to fully dedicate their life to obey and serve our Heavenly Father.—Rom. 12:1

Those responding to this call have “wandered in the wilderness” of this “present evil world.” They are not satisfied with the present life, but instead feel like “strangers and pilgrims,” desiring to “abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.” (Ps. 107:4; Gal. 1:4; I Pet. 2:11) They are those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness.”—Matt. 5:6

Although many hear about the heavenly call, few have chosen to accept this invitation to make a covenant by sacrifice. (Matt. 22:14) This heavenly invitation has been

answered by one here and one there. They are gathered “from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.” (Ps. 107:3) Still fewer, only a “little flock,” prove to be “faithful” unto death.—Luke 12:32; Rev. 2:10; 17:14

Those accepting the heavenly call desire to live close to our Heavenly Father, to know more about him, and to serve him and his people in whatever ways he may permit. They are not satisfied with present conditions. Instead, their sentiment in the present life is that their “citizenship is in heaven,” and that they “do not have a lasting city” here upon the earth, but “are seeking the city which is to come.”—Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:12-14, *NASB*

The “lasting city” which they are seeking is the heavenly phase of God’s kingdom, the “new Jerusalem,” which is promised to “Him that overcometh.” (Rev. 3:12) This “holy city, new Jerusalem” is described as “coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband,” who is Christ Jesus. (Rev. 21:2,9; II Cor. 11:2) The new Jerusalem will be the entire Christ class in glory, Jesus the “head” together with his “body” members. (Eph. 5:23,24) This heavenly phase of the kingdom will not be visible to the rest of mankind, who will be restored to perfect human life in the earthly phase of the kingdom, based on their obedience to the divine laws then in operation.

At the present time, those who accept the heavenly call are led by the Lord in a “straight way,” a “narrow” way, which is indicated by the instructions and precepts given in the word of God. (Ps. 107:7, *NASB*; Matt. 7:14) They not only delight to search the word of God to find the directions of this “straight way,” but after finding these they “eat them”—that is, they strive to personally apply God’s principles and standards. (Jer. 15:16; James 1:22) The Lord directs in the right way, the best way, therefore we should be careful to note his leadings and be quick in following them. ■