

God's Steadfast Love

Key Verse: *"Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture."*
—*Psalms 100:3, New American Standard Bible*

Selected Scripture:
Psalms 100:1-5

PSALM 100 IS AN ADMONITION to thank and praise our loving Heavenly Father. It begins with the words, from the *NASB* translation, "Shout joyfully to the LORD," an expression found throughout the Book of Psalms. (Ps. 66:1; 81:1; 95:1,2; 98:4,6) Such joyful praise is desired from "all the earth." Here the word "earth" is a symbol representing all mankind.—Ps. 22:27

In verse 2 of our lesson the psalmist instructs us to accompany such praises with our actions. He writes, "Serve the LORD with gladness." Similarly the Prophet Jeremiah wrote: "Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart." (Jer. 15:16, *NASB*) As with Jeremiah, the word of God should bring us our greatest joy and we should feed upon his words. In addition, our obedience in following the Lord's instructions and principles, along with any service we might render to him and his people, should be done both voluntarily and with joy.

In verse 3 we are instructed to acknowledge and have complete assurance that our Heavenly Father is the one and only true God. The psalmist writes, "Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves." (*NASB*) Likewise, Paul told those in

Athens, “God who made the world and all things in it ... is Lord of heaven and earth,” and he “does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things.” (Acts 17:22-25, *NASB*) How humble this should make us before our Heavenly Father, realizing that he does not need anything from us, nor are we indispensable in order for him to work out his plans and purposes.

In the reminder of verse 3 the psalmist expresses God’s steadfast love to those who strive to serve him and follow his principles. He writes, “We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.” (*NASB*) Just as a shepherd watches over, protects, leads, guides and lovingly takes care of his flock, so too does our Heavenly Father likewise do for all those who are striving to follow after him.

Verse 4 instructs us to “Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.” Those who continually exhibit thankfulness to the Lord for all his mercies and blessings are led to count not their present lives dear unto themselves, but instead are joyfully willing to lay down their lives in the divine service.—Acts 20:22-24; Phil. 3:7,8

Their hearts are filled with praise, having made a full consecration of themselves. Thus, the heavenly light and food supplied to them from the Word of God enables them to rejoice, even in tribulation. (II Cor. 1:3-6; 7:4) Without strength and enlightenment from God’s Word, such tribulations would discourage them. However, because they have entered into a special relationship with the Heavenly Father and claim the “precious promises” which he has given, they are joyful in their Christian walk. (Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4) When their pilgrimage of the present life is ended, and if faithful unto death, they shall receive a heavenly resurrection and fulness of joy and will enter “into the joy” of the Lord in the full and complete sense.—Matt. 25:21,23; Rev. 2:10 ■