

SPECIAL FOCUS THE GOD WHO RESCUES

INTRODUCTION

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It can be easy to thank God for the things we see right in front of us such as food, possessions, and family. Those can certainly be blessings from God's hand, but we shouldn't stop there. God has done something far greater than give us the things we enjoy in this life. There are spiritual blessings that go far beyond this present life. We can be thankful for the way He has rescued us.

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THE GOD WHO RESCUES

Leader pages on pp. 157-161

THE POINT:
WE CAN BE THANKFUL
THAT GOD RESCUES US.

PSALM 30:1-12

¹ I will exalt you, LORD, because you have lifted me up and have not allowed my enemies to triumph over me. ² LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you healed me. ³ LORD, you brought me up from Sheol; you spared me from among those going down to the Pit. ⁴ Sing to the LORD, you his faithful ones, and praise his holy name. ⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor, a lifetime. Weeping may stay overnight but there is joy in the morning.

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⁶ When I was secure, I said, "I will never be shaken." ⁷ LORD, when you showed your favor, you made me stand like a strong mountain; when you hid your face, I was terrified. ⁸ LORD, I called to you; I sought favor from my Lord: ⁹ "What gain is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your truth?"

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¹⁰ LORD, listen and be gracious to me; LORD, be my helper. ¹¹ You turned my lament into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, ¹² **so that I can sing to you and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise you forever.**

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MEMORY VERSE

KEYWORDS

I will exalt you (v. 1)—David expressed his determination to exalt God, to lift Him higher.

"... up from Sheol" (v. 2)—The covenant-keeping God brought him up from this dangerous situation that he described as *Sheol the realm of the dead, the grave*.

Hid your face (v. 7)—David exposed the consequences of his pride. The Lord hid His face from him.

"... praise you forever" (v.7)—David literally or metaphorically cast himself down before the Lord to offer his unending praise and gratitude.

WHY SHOULD WE EXPRESS THANKS TO GOD?

People like rescue stories. Perhaps that's why we flock to theaters to watch movies like *Harriet* based on the life of Harriet Tubman, a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad, and *Black Panther*, a Marvel Comics movie featuring the fictitious nation, Wakanda. In films like these, we have seen slaves freed and kingdoms rescued.

However, not every testimony of rescue is as dramatic as those depicted on the silver screen. Maybe you cried for rescue when you came to the stark realization that math now included letters as you started algebra. You may have needed advice

while raising your children or grandchildren. Some of us have volunteered to host a family holiday dinner for the first time but needed the help of a seasoned cook—and an aunt provided the rescue you needed: a shoebox containing Grandma's handwritten recipes.

We often cry out to various sources when trouble comes our way. But in Psalm 30, when David needed rescue, he cried out to God and trusted Him to meet his needs. True to His character, God heard David's cry and came to his aid. God can rescue us too! When He does, our response should be one of thanksgiving and praise, just like David's.

Rescued from Enemies //

Psalm 30:1-5

By the time a husband and wife celebrate 50 years of marriage, they've experienced happiness hardships, and hurts together. Whether we see the two hold hands or take an evening walk together, their faithfulness—to their marriage and to each other—is a beautiful sight to behold. We also witness faithfulness when parents sacrificially support their children's sports endeavors by volunteering in booster clubs and other related activities—even if their children don't get into the game.

Our heavenly Father is the best example of faithfulness because He is faithful to rescue His children from destruction. Because we go to church and read our Bibles, we may think we can dodge devastation. Let's not fool ourselves! David, who wrote this psalm, showed us that he was heading towards destruction and needed rescue. We face some of the same issues David did.

David needed to be rescued from various enemies. Early on, King Saul was jealous of David and tried to kill him multiple times. Later in David's life, his own son, Absalom, tried to overthrow David's kingship. David knew what it was like to be targeted.



THE POINT: WE CAN BE THANKFUL THAT GOD RESCUES US.

Today, Black people also feel targeted because of things like racial profiling, unfair sentencing, and other forms of systemic racism. We can feel like our enemy is in the cubical next to us or just down the street. The reality, however, is that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens” (Eph. 6:12). We all face a real enemy in Satan and his dark forces. Therefore, we need to cry out to God to rescue us.

In this passage, David cried out for help, and God healed him. The passage doesn't reveal David's ailment, but it does tell us that God healed him. David gave God all the credit and also acknowledged God as the One who spared him from going down to the Pit. David didn't claim to rescue himself from the Pit of darkness; he rightfully pointed to God alone as his rescuer.

David responded to God's faithful rescue in two distinct ways.

1. **Personal praise.** He started by saying that he would exalt the Lord. He then went on to indicate that his action was because of God's faithful rescue. David did not play a part in his own rescue.
2. **Group praise.** David also led others in praise. As the passage progresses, his praise shifted from singular to plural. David called God's faithful ones to also sing and praise His holy name. David was no longer content praising God by himself; he wanted to lead others to do the same thing.

David didn't invite people to praise God based on how good they sounded or whether they knew all the words to the song. His invitation was to the faithful ones who had experienced God's faithful hand of rescue. If we have been rescued from our enemies, healed from a sickness, or taken out of darkness, then the invitation is for us as well. We can express gratitude to God for His faithful rescue from things that seek to destroy us.

HOW DOES PSALM 30:5 ENCOURAGE YOU TO KEEP ASKING AND TRUSTING GOD FOR HIS HELP?

Rescued from Pride // Psalm 30:6-10

Let's be honest, we all struggle with pride. If we're the first person in our family to earn a degree, buy a home, or get a high-paying position with benefits, we might think more highly of ourselves than we should. We probably feel secure, stroke our own egos, or claim to be a self-made person. Those of us who share this mindset often have the same three best friends: me, myself, and I. We're not the only ones who have struggled with pride. David



DIGGING DEEPER SACKCLOTH

Sackcloth was a cheap, durable material that was made from goat or camel hair. It was used in practical applications for saddlebags, bedding, grain bags, and shepherds' work attire. Some men and women used the material for their everyday apparel. Sackcloth was an abrasive material, and wearing it was a form of self-punishment. Tearing one's clothing and putting on sackcloth could denote one's repentance, distress, remorse, or mourning. During their sorrow, some people not only wore sackcloth, but also fasted, sat on ash piles, or placed ashes on their heads to emphasize their extreme grief. When God rescued David from his sorrow, He removed the sackcloth that represented David's misery. Gladness was the symbolic clothing that David wore instead (Ps. 30:11).

When God clothes you with gladness, how do you respond?



struggled with pride as well. God was aware of David's struggle and came to rescue him from his pride. David's self-confidence had skyrocketed. He used the word "I" three times in verse six alone. This shows his focus was himself. But he calls out his prideful ways. He wrote that when he felt secure, he would say, "I will never be shaken" (v. 6)—a stance that rendered him vulnerable to the sin of pride.

Many of us are guilty of placing too much confidence in ourselves. I remember all too well after completing a four-year degree at a nationally known university, I headed off to the Dallas-Fort Worth area to start my first round of seminary. As I thought about this journey, I knew that some church would be blessed to find me and invite me to be their youth pastor. That "church" ended up being a national chain restaurant, and I was invited to be a server at a little over \$3 an hour. As I would reach across the table to hand someone their meal, many would recognize my class ring and ask why I was serving tables. My response was always the same: "I am a seminary student, and the Lord is teaching me humility." Both statements were true.

WHAT HAS GOD USED TO HUMBLE YOU? WHAT LESSON DID YOU LEARN?

We, like David, have all experienced a prideful time in our lives. But we do not need to remain in our pride. We see in verse eight that David asked God for help. David was a powerful leader, yet he did not delegate this task to someone else. Instead, he

called out to the Lord and sought favor from Him. When God graciously points out the pride that we have in our lives, we need to go to Him personally. It is always good to have a godly parent, pastor, or small-group member pray for us as we journey through life, but we also need to go to the Lord ourselves. When we know that we are caught in the sin of pride, we need to personally call out to God and seek Him.

Notice the personal nature of David's call out to God. David said that he "sought favor from my Lord" (v. 8). The word "my" indicates David had a personal relationship with the Lord, and he knew that the Lord was approachable. Our greatest act of pride is the false belief that we do not need the Lord. David had a relationship with the Lord and knew that he could call out to the Lord to rescue him from his pride.

David also understood that the Lord was available. Verse 10 shows us that David knew God to be a gracious listener who would help him. When we come to understand our pride, we do not need someone to point out the differences between us and God. Instead, we come before the Lord who is holy, and we humbly ask Him to graciously listen to us. We ask Him to be our helper because we realize how much we truly need His involvement. David knew that he needed to be rescued from his pride, so he called out to the Lord. We too need to be rescued from our pride, and we too should call out to the Lord.

Rescued from Sorrow //

Psalm 30:11-12

As we continue in our study of David's plight to be rescued, we see that God helped him turn around and go a different direction as well. David was experiencing sorrow, and God rescued David from this sorrow. David did not give himself any credit. He didn't indicate that trying harder, personal self-help, or any other effort turned him around. He specifically stated that God helped him turn around.

This adjustment had a significant impact on David. He went from a state of lament to dancing. To be in a state of lament means to be in a state of sorrow or mourning. This state, however, was changed to

THE POINT: WE CAN BE THANKFUL THAT GOD RESCUES US.

a state of dancing, as a direct result of the hand of God. When we are going in the wrong direction, it is always wise to remember that God wants to rescue us from our pending sorrow.

He also exchanged sackcloth for gladness. During this era, wearing sackcloth was an outward sign of sorrow. David was experiencing this, and others were able to see it in what he was wearing. God, once again, graciously rescued him from the pain and grief he was experiencing. No longer did he experience sorrow, because it had been replaced with gladness.

The result of God turning David around and rescuing him from his sorrow was twofold.

- **David could sing again and not be silent.**
When God steps in and rescues us from our sorrow, we cannot help but burst out in song. When we transition from sorrow to gladness, a change also occurs in our hearts, and we are ready to sing.
- **David was willing to praise God forever.**
David said that he was going to praise the Lord his God. He wouldn't ask anyone else to praise God in his place.

WHEN HAS THE LORD TURNED YOUR LAMENT INTO GLADNESS?

DID YOU KNOW?

When a 31-year-old Black mother, Henrietta Lacks, was diagnosed with cervical cancer in the 1950s, she didn't know her tumor cells would be harvested nor did she give permission for them to be used for scientific research. Lacks died eight months after her diagnosis, but the cells stolen from her body continued to aid scientists in tens of thousands of medical studies—resulting in the development of vaccines, drugs for HIV/AIDS, and more! Lacks's cells have rescued millions from disease and death. Sadly, some of Lacks family members went without medical insurance while several companies profited from Lacks's genetic material. In 2023, the Lacks family reached a settlement in an effort to acknowledge their family member's contributions to science and receive some form of compensation.²² Consider the Lacks's experience with racial inequities in health care and how God used the unjust act to rescue millions.²³

Biblical Truth: God is able to use evil intent for good outcome.

How are lamenting and "dancing" depicted in Lacks's story?

LIVE IT

How can you express thanks to God for rescuing you?

We may have given heartfelt thank-you's to gracious parents, a savvy financial planner, or a patient teacher whose kindness and wisdom helped save us from stress and self-induced hardships. But we must never forget to thank our heavenly Father. He can use people, places, and events—whatever He desires—to arrange the perfect rescue. He did it for David, and David responded with praise and thanksgiving. Choose one of the following ideas to express your thanks to God.

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- **Pray.** Write down five things from which God has rescued you. Each time the situation comes to mind, thank God for being faithful to rescue you.
- **Write.** Choose one of the times in your life in which God rescued you. Write a thank you note to God, expressing your gratitude for His care in stepping in to help you.
- **Share.** Choose someone close to you and share your story of God's rescue. Pray that God would use your story to encourage someone else in his or her journey with Him.

DAILY READINGS

1. MORNING JOY // PSALM 30:5

Elementary school teachers have shared stories about students who forge parents' names on failed spelling tests, lie about why their homework is not submitted on time, and use lunch money to buy ice cream. When parents become privy to these antics they become angry with their children, have stern conversations with them, and temporarily take away a few of their privileges. But once their children fess up and change their behavior, parents don't stay angry for long. Our heavenly Father doesn't stay angry with us forever, either. He is patient and merciful with us and extends grace to us when we confess and repent. Throughout our lives, we see His hand of favor.

God ensures our tears are temporary, and because of Him, we can expect joy in the morning.

2. HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT // PSALM 30:11-12

Many childhood songs stick with us for a lifetime. They bring happy memories and comforting thoughts. They put smiles on our faces. Whenever we hear "If You're Happy and You Know It" we're likely to start singing. Clapping and other movements soon follow. Sometimes, it's hard to be silent and sit still when we're happy. David would agree! When God delivered David, he wasn't just happy. He was exuberant! God transformed David's mourning into dancing. But David's praise didn't end with a dance. He sang songs and promised to praise God forever. In other words, David couldn't stay calm or keep quiet! He was happy and everyone knew it.

When God rescues us, His faithfulness should move us—physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

3. UNSTOPPABLE // PROVERBS 16:18

Sometimes, we look at our careers, retirement accounts, or good reports from our physicians and believe we're unstoppable. If we're not careful, we could easily become too confident in our personal strengths and accomplishments. But things like Hurricane Katrina, COVID-19, and recessions have humbled us. We need God's favor; we're

not invincible. Like some affluent, modern-day Americans, David became prideful and arrogant in his position, and he thought he could never be shaken. Eventually, he recognized that his success was dependent on God's favor and not on his personal efforts. When we depend on ourselves we set ourselves up for a terrible fall. We need God in every area of our lives.

God's favor is what opens doors, changes hearts, and clears the path for our success.

4. LOVE LIFTED ME // PSALM 40:1-2

Fishing requires patience, time, and effort. When we go fishing, we occasionally may reel in trash that we need to throw out, or we could reel in an undesirable catch that we need to toss back into the water. Aren't you glad that when God hears the repentant sinner's cry He doesn't pick us up and then throw us away? In the hymn "Love Lifted Me," worshipers sing about the One who rescues us and keeps us from drowning in the tumultuous sea of our sins. God hears our cries and lifts us out of the water to safety. He does this because He loves us. He is patient with us because He doesn't want to see us perish.

When God rescues us, He completely saves us, and His love keeps lifting us to new heights.

5. IT'S ALL GOOD // 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

According to its website, the mission of the Life Is Good apparel company is to spread the power of optimism. Even if we don't own one of the company's graphic T-shirts, as Christians we can demonstrate our optimism—and faith—with godly actions because our hope is in Christ. Jesus empowers us so that we can rejoice even in tough situations. We can pray without ceasing and know that God hears our requests. We can give thanks to Him because He's good. God can turn our troubles into testimonies and our sorrows into joy. He is faithful to His Word. And best of all—He saves!

When we think about all of the benefits we have in Christ, we can't help but say, "It's all good." Rejoice!



For He is Good: The Psalms of Thanksgiving

BY THOMAS H. GOODMAN

We can be like hogs in an apple orchard,” a country preacher told his congregation. “We can enjoy all the fruit of this life without ever looking up to see where it came from.” The thanksgiving songs in the Book of Psalms guide us to look up. In these songs the poet thanked the God who “upheld my right and my cause” (Ps. 9:4), “rescued me” (18:17), “healed me” (30:2), “forgave the guilt of my sin” (32:5), “answered me” (34:4), and “brought us to a place of abundance” after a time of severe testing (66:12).¹

Categorizing the Psalms

Such songs of relieved thanksgiving fall into what Old Testament scholar and author Walter Brueggemann categorizes as “psalms of reorientation.” The 150 psalms are not organized², so with each new psalm the reader may move from praise, to lament, to wisdom teaching, and so on—much like listening to an apparently random selection of songs on a radio program. As a result, various writers have suggested ways to organize the psalms into groups based on certain characteristics.³ Brueggemann’s categorization is particularly helpful; each psalm, he says, describes life

in a state of orientation, disorientation, or reorientation.⁴

Psalms of orientation sprang out of the times when life was anxiety-free and thus the worshiper could look away from himself and meditate on the phenomena of the world around him. In these poems “the heavens declare the glory of God” (19:1); the Lord is the believer’s shepherd (23:1); the Enthroned One laughs at those who oppose Him (2:4); glorious things are said of Jerusalem (Ps. 87); and brothers live in unity (Ps. 133).

Poems from times of disorientation comprise the bulk of the Book of Psalms. In these complaints the poet desired the restored joy of God like a deer pants for water (42:1). He described how God had rejected and humbled his people (44:9); the poet cried out until his throat was parched (69:3), but God did not answer (22:2); the Lord had exalted the right hand of the king’s foe and cast the king’s throne to the ground (89:42,44); and the poet asked, “Will you forget me forever?” (13:1). At times, the psalmist confessed that the hardships had resulted from his own sins (Ps. 38) or from the sins of the nation (Ps. 60). At other times, he cried for God to rescue him from a difficulty that did not come from his sinfulness (Ps. 142) or from the nation’s unfaithfulness (Ps. 44).

Surprised by the inbreaking of grace and deliverance, the believer experienced what Brueggemann called re-orientation. A psalm from this phase gives words to the excitement of God’s intervention in a personal or national crisis. In these poems God stoops down to make the king great (18:35); God lifts the believer out of the depths so that his enemies can no longer gloat over him (30:1); God breaks the chains of his nation’s exile (107:14); and God covers the repentant man’s sins (32:1).

A thanksgiving psalm celebrates God’s “reorientation” of the believer’s life. Leslie Allen, professor of Old Testament, observes:

The song . . . gives voice to the excited beginnings of new life rising from the ruins of personal crisis. The phase is destined to give way to a more settled one which will be both like and unlike the phase of old orientation. Like, in that it will be marked by the stability, steady progress, and appreciation of life enjoyed before. Unlike, in that it will reflect a maturer faith that has found in tragedy and survival schooling in wisdom, and wrested out of them a deeper relationship with God.⁵



From the Nineveh palace, a relief showing deer being chased into a hunter’s net. The psalmist, distressed, longed for God as a deer does for water (Ps. 42:1-2).

Defining A Thanksgiving Psalm

What characteristics mark a psalm as one of thanksgiving? Old Testament professor R.P. Belcher suggests four. First, the poet expressed “a declaration of intent to give thanks . . . followed by the account of the distress and the change that has come to the psalmist’s life because of the deliverance.” Second, the reader finds “confession directed to others that Yahweh was the one who delivered from the distress (Ps. 18:27-28; 34:6-9).” Third, the poet mentioned, or called for, a thanksgiving sacrifice (66:13-15). In fact, the most commonly recorded setting for thanksgiving psalms was the temple in Jerusalem where worshipers lifted up thank offerings. Finally, “the psalm might end with further affirmations of thanksgiving or exhortations for others to give thanks (Ps. 118:28-29).” Belcher acknowledges “the aforementioned order is flexible.”⁶



Atop Mount Nebo, a modern artistic representation of a serpent lifted up on a pole (Ps. 30:2).

Hymns that praise God for His worthy characteristics are closely related to the psalms of thanksgiving. “The difference is that the thanksgiving song is crisis-oriented,” explains Allen. “It is a response to what God has just done in the experience of the believing person or community. . . . The hymn, on the other hand, lacks such immediacy. It surveys the character and work of God in a general fashion and from further afield.”⁷ So, for example, in both Psalm 96 (v. 4) and Psalm 48 (v. 1) the poet exclaimed, “Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise,” but the motivation was different in each song. Psalm 96 is a hymn of praise in which the songwriter called on the heavens, the earth, the sea, the fields, and all creation to rejoice in God. Psalm 48, however, is a song of thanksgiving where the songwriter called on the relieved citizens of Jerusalem to reflect on a recent divine deliverance from their enemies.

Offering Up Thanksgiving Psalms

While some thanksgiving psalms give expression of an entire grateful community, most are pronouncements of gratitude from an individual whom God had saved or rescued. The individual may have called on others to amplify his praise to God, but clearly the testimony was uniquely his. So, in Psalm 66:20 the poet exclaimed, “Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!” (emphasis added), whereas in Psalm 124:6 the entire community, following a divine rescue from their enemies, was led to sing, “Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by their teeth” (emphasis added).

In this regard, Psalm 107 is unique as a thanksgiving psalm because it is both communal and individual. The poet called the entire community to find their own individual reasons to thank God. Four imaginative scenarios encourage the people of God to reflect on the various instances in which God can demonstrate His mercy: when His people are lost in the wilderness (vv. 4-9), imprisoned (vv. 10-16), sick (vv. 17-22), and caught in a frightening sea storm (vv. 23-32).⁸ The instances of imprisonment and sickness are particularly noteworthy, because the poet indicated those predicaments occurred as a

result of sin (vv. 11,17). So, the psalm encouraged the people to thank a merciful God who rescued them even when rescue was undeserved.⁹

God demonstrated His undeserved rescue supremely in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the salvation of sinners. And we today serve a God who, having given His own Son for our salvation, will “also, along with him, graciously give us all things” (Rom. 8:32). Therefore, believers are to give thanks to God “for everything” (Eph. 5:20) and “in all circumstances” (1 Thess. 5:18). The psalms of thanksgiving can show us the way.

1. All Scripture quotations are from the New International Version (NIV).
2. The psalms were arranged into five books with doxologies at the end of the first four books (41:13; 72:18-20; 89:52; 106:48). Psalm 150 concludes the fifth book and also the entire Psalter. See Leslie C. Allen, *Word Biblical Themes: Psalms* (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 12-13.
3. For example, Tremper Longman identifies seven genres: the hymn, the lament, the thanksgiving psalm, the psalm of remembrance, the psalm of confidence, the wisdom psalm, and the kingship psalm. Tremper Longman 21, *How to Read the Psalms* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 23-34. See also the treatment of psalm genres in Willem A. VanGemeren, “Psalms” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 28-33; Allen, *Psalms*, 17-23.
4. Walter Brueggemann, “Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 3-32. See also Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984).
5. Allen, *Psalms*, 39.
6. R.P. Belcher Jr., “Thanksgiving, Psalms of” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*, ed. Tremper Longman 21 and Peter Enns, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 805. See also Allen, *Psalms*, 20; Longman, *How to Read the Psalms*, 30-31.
7. Allen, *Psalms*, 21-22. Claus Westermann argued that hymns and songs of thanksgiving are one and the same category, though he acknowledged enough distinction between them to call psalms of thanksgiving

“declarative psalms of praise” because they give thanks to God “for a specific act of deliverance,” as opposed to “descriptive psalms of praise” (i.e., hymns). Belcher, 805-806.

8. The fact that this is not to be regarded as a list of specific instances that certain people had recently endured is underscored by the fourfold “Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress” (Ps. 107:6,13,19,28; wording differs slightly in verses 6 and 28). Another fourfold-repeated phrase: “Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unflinching love and his wonderful deeds for men” (vv. 8,15,21, and 31).
9. We can understand all four instances of rescue as deliverance from the consequences of sin. A description of wilderness wandering recalls the exodus rebellion at the border of the promised land, while Jorge Mejia sees in the rescue at sea a certain mercy toward imprudence: “Sin is not referred to in this connection, as in the central portions of the Psalm, but there seems to be a certain connotation of imprudence in the fashion the seafarers commit themselves for the sake of trade, to the dangers of the ‘great waters.’” Jorge Mejia “Some Observations on Psalm 107,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 5 (February 1975): 64. In fact, some commentators regard all four instances of divine rescue as imaginative illustrations of how God miraculously and graciously restored his people’s fortunes after the Babylonian exile. Allen, *Psalms*, 47, see also Mejia, 66; Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, vol. 21 in *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco: Word Books, 1983), 62-65.

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Cattle in the region of ancient Bashan. The psalmist expressed thanksgiving for God destroying the great kings that had inhabited the land of Canaan, including the king of Bashan (Ps. 136:20).