

Can you think of a time in your life when God delivered you from a danger or hardship? Today we are looking at Psalm 66 and the writer says, **“Let me tell you what God has done for me” (66:16)**. Today as we read Psalm 66, each one of you can think of your own experiences, what God has done for you, and you can have those experiences in your mind as you do what the Psalm says:

“Sing the Glory of His Name.”

First, sing the glory of his name, for what he has done for us. The Psalm begins, **“Shout for joy to God all the earth!” (66:1)** Can you think of a time when you literally shouted for joy? Perhaps you were watching your favorite sports team play. The Psalm writer encourages us to shout for joy to God. He says, **“Shout for joy to God, all the earth. Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious” (66:2)**.

What inspires the Psalm writer to sing praise to God is the glorious things God has done. He says, **“Say to God, ‘How awesome are your deeds’” (66:3)**. In this Psalm the writer wants to focus especially on the things God has done to deliver people from hardship.

There are certain kinds of hardship that come upon a whole community or even the whole world. As the Psalmist talks about the great things God has done, he first talks about the times when God has delivered people from the kinds of hardship that come upon a whole community or the whole world. He says, **“Come and see what God has done, his awesome deeds for mankind!” (66:5)**. In the past God has done awesome things for mankind. Think of the vaccines that God has allowed men to discover. I don’t know how God will deliver us from the current Pandemic, but I know that God has delivered mankind from medical emergencies in the past and it’s appropriate for us to turn to him to deliver us now.

The Psalmist talks about a time when God delivered people from a hardship that had come upon the entire community of Israel. He says that God **“turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the waters on foot” (66:6)**. Can you think of a time when God turned the sea into dry land and his people passed through the waters on foot? The Exodus from Egypt. God’s people were slaves in Egypt. And after the plagues Pharaoh finally let the people go. But then he changed his mind and took his army to chase after the Israelites. Pharaoh had the Israelites trapped against the Red Sea. And God parted the Red Sea so the Israelites could go through on dry ground.

Are there any miraculous things that God has done to deliver all of us? Well, we were all captive to sin. Our sin would have condemned us to hell. But God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sin on the cross. And three days later God did something even more awesome than parting the Red Sea. God gloriously raised Jesus from the dead. The Psalmist says, **“Come, let us rejoice in him!” (66:6)** Even though the resurrection of Jesus happened two thousand years ago, let us shout for joy and rejoice in him today because the resurrection of Jesus means that we also will be raised to life on the Last Day. The resurrection of Jesus means that we have been delivered from death and that is plenty of reason to **“Shout for joy to God all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious” (66:1-2)**.

As I said, there are some kinds of trouble that come upon a whole community or upon the whole world. There are kinds of trouble that come to an individual. The psalmist also talks about how God had delivered him from individual troubles. He says in verse 16, **“Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me” (Psalm 66:16)**. What has God done for you to deliver you from the troubles you have faced in your life?

As we read through this next section of the Psalm think about how this Psalm could just as well be describing you and your life. **“He has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping” (Psalm 66:9)**. Can you think of a time when that could be a description of your life? Can you think of a time when God preserved your life? That’s something God has done for you. That’s a reason to **“Sing the glory of his name” (66:9)**.

“For you, God, tested us; you refined us like silver. You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs. You let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water, but you brought us out to a place of abundance.” (66:10). Can you think of a time when that could have described your life? Can you think of a time when you have gone through fire and water? Maybe you’re going through fire and water right now.

If you are going through fire and water right now remember two things: It has a purpose and it has an end. First, it has a purpose. The Psalm writer says, **“For you, God, tested us; You refined us like silver” (66:10)**. Difficulties have a way of refining us in a way that only someone who has been through the experience can tell you about. So difficulties have a purpose, and they also have an end. The Psalmist says, **“We went through fire and water, but you brought us out to a place of abundance” (66:12)**. The ultimate place of abundance that God will bring us to is heaven and there we will sing his glory forever.

Until we get to heaven we will worship God here on earth and thank him for what he has done for us. **“I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you – vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble” (66:13-14)**. Apparently when the psalmist was in trouble, he made a vow to God that he would bring a thank offering to the temple when God had delivered him. One commentator explained well that this vow was not a bargain with God, but it was an expression of confidence that God would answer his prayer and a promise to be grateful when his prayer was answered.¹

When God delivers us, we want to thank him. The psalmist said, **“I will sacrifice fat animals to you and an offering of rams; I will offer bulls and goats” (Psalm 66:15)**. How can we say thank you to God for all that he has done for us? We thank him when we sing praise to him. The Psalm writer says and **“Sing the glory of his name” (66:2)**. **“Praise our God, all peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard” (66:8)**. We also say thank you God by telling others what God has done. **“Come and hear, all you who fear God, let me tell you what he has done for me” (66:16)**. And we also say thank you to God by bringing offerings to him. **“I will come to your temple with burnt offerings” (66:13)**. This is how we say thank you to God for the awesome things he has done, for delivering us from sin, for delivering us from death, and for delivering us from the troubles we face in the course of everyday life.

Like so many of the Psalms, we can read this Psalm with our own experiences in mind. The times God has delivered us in our lives. And especially how God delivered us from sin and death. As we continue to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, we do what the Psalm writer says. We **“say to God, ‘How awesome are your deeds’ (66:3)**. We **“let the sound of his praise be heard” (66:8)**. We **“sing the glory of his name” (66:2)**. Amen.

¹ John Brug, *A Commentary on Psalms 1 – 72* (Milwaukee: Northwestern, 2004), 595.