

## The Lord's Comprehensive Benefits Package

- Ps 103. Vs 1-2a. I love: vs 2b. Bnfts. Heb wrd mns: ways God deals w/us, esp in love – so: grace, mercies, goodnss, bnfts. Even KJ trnsltn. Today when hear bnfts, most Amrcns probly think bnfts receive from job. If start new job, dpndng on where wrk, might be offrd cmprhnsv bnfts pckg (CBP). Could incld: salary, hrly rate/pay; hlth/dntl/vsn/life ins; vaca time; paid time off; emplyr contrbtns to pension, retrmnt acnt; travel reimb; work from home; even daycare or excrse room – all kinds bnfts in CBP. Certly not evryone has job that inclds all these bnfts. Obvsly busnsses offer these try entice, retain wrkrs. But I think we can all see how these benefits be attractive, and help/bnft employee.
- Ps 103, for me (esp bec begins: **forget not all bnfts**), reads like CBP, from Lord, for his ppl. Vs after vs after vs lists one genrous bnft after anthr, and reminds us just how gracious Lord is to us. Smtimes we forget that; we forget Lord's love for us, become cyncl, pssmstc, dwnrght rundwn by all fatiguing trbls face in life. That's when need Ps 103: remind us how gracious/genrous Lord is us, w/this CBP.
- Vs. 2; list/bnfts: vs. 3-6. At top of list: frgvns, vs. 3a; say lot more re frgvns in min. But next, vs. 3b. Heals scknss/sin, w/med/Gos; J dth/res heals sin-sick souls. Also heals bodies. Pt's mthr/law in Gos; dth's drstp to wlkng around, like that! You ever been really sick, hspitlzd, major surgry? Here you are, recovrd; God healed you! Takes care bodies, restores hlth. We need remem that, esp in mid pndmc: God more pwrfl than Covid, not other way around. He created bodies, knows exctly what do heal us – vs. 3b. And when doesn't (dth: result, smone close), doesn't mean didn't have pwr/desire save; just means had diff plan, for etrl life, instead earthly life. But whnvr you're sick, remem: vs. 3b. And vs. 4. Idea: we're stuck in pit, can't get out/save selves, doomed. But Xp redeems: means pays price to set us free, lift us up out pit. That price (Cat): holy, prcs bld, incnt suff/dth. J gave life cross in order lift you up out pit/sin. Now crowns you! Ever seen corntion (crown on head/monarch) (not HS homecmng)? J crowns you – that's how special you are to him. You: kg/qn in God's eyes, bec thru bap, connctd to your bro, J, Kg/unvrs. You're in royal fam/God, who vs. 5a, too many good thngs count. Ever done this: actly tried count all blssngs, list out 1 by 1? I don't think can; not pssbl. Exhstv list evthng God's graciously done for us? No way! Vs. 5a. Here in these opening vss Ps 103, we're begngng see just how cmprhnsv this CBP from Lord really is!
- And God has long hstry blssng ppl. Vs. 7. Ms – 3500 yrs ago! (Further: A&E). But for now, think re time/Ms: Isrlts, slaves; cried out; sent Ms to Pharoah; 10 plgs; Red Sea; army dstryd – so all these blssngs/bnfts. Then Mt. Sinai, Ms, law from Lord – what haps? Ppl Isrl (Aaron), golden calf, wrshpd. Imagine: after all mrcls/blssngs you've seen: wrshpd false god! It's in this context Ps 103: vs. 8. Heard wrds before? Sure have! When Ms went up mnt 2<sup>nd</sup> time in Ex 34, God calls self: "**The Lord, the Lord, the compssnt/gracious God, slow to anger, abndng in love & fthflnss**" (6). This turn/phrase (repeat) comes up over 10x in OT, some form; fav phrase of Heb prphts, to remind ppl God's grace. So here in Ps 103, Dvd: vs. 8-10. Isrlts certly didn't desrv anthng good from God; neither do we, bec our sins. But Lord remains our faithful God, just like did for Israel. W/this psg/Ps, Dvd wants you think: man, those Isrlts did lot bad things; but Lord still loved, forgave. And I do lot bad things too (Dvd: affair w/Bathsheba; killed Uriah), but Lord still loves, forgives me – bec vs. 8.
- And if you have hard time belvng that (bec, one tricks dvl: convince you so bad, unforgvble; God couldn't psbly love you), acctng this idea God actly loves/forgvs you persnly: here, backs it up w/3 exmpls. (Told you earlier we'd talk frgvns.) 1<sup>st</sup>: vs. 11. Ever flown plane, sat window seat, looked down from 30k ft? Huge distnc! Can't see ppl; smaller than dots! Or go higher: think Intrntnal Space Station, orbiting earth. From ground, no way see astrnts up there – huge distnc! Well, vs. 11. God's love for you: greater than distnc from earth to outer space. From hvn, looks down, doesn't see sins; not even dots to him, bec he's frgvn them thru Xp – so great his love for you! 2<sup>nd</sup>: vs. 12. Imagine trvllng due east, for so long, that go all way around planet, end up back where started? Imagine doing that at equator, where dstnc longst, ~25k miles. Well, that's how far (even farther) God's rmvd your

sins from you. Gone! Xp paid for them. This phrase E/W means: couldn't be farther apart. Or think J, arms extndd on cross: this how much J loves you! And 3<sup>rd</sup>: vs. 13. Lot bad dads out there; good, too. But like I tell my kids (you too): you have 2 frs: earthly & hvnly. And whthr/not earthly fr good to you, your hvnly Fr is perf. Loves you prfly, w/a perf love, perf compssn, and he always will. So if you have hard time frgving self or belvng God frgvs/loves you, please remem these 3 exmpls: hvns/earth, E/W, and compssn of hvnly Fr.

- This is Lord's CBP: just one blssng upon another – not only thruout life, even when face dth. Vs. 14. AW is next wk; remndd: dust are/return. We are mortal; bec sin, we will all die. Unless J returns at end/wrld while we're still alive, all face dth. Seems like Covid's made us even more afraid dth lately. But whthr it's Covid or smthng else that claims us: vs. 15-16. But, vs. 17a. Means: even in dth, J'll be w/us. **“Even though valley/shadow/dth, fear no evil, for you w/me” (Ps 23)**. When J passed thru VSD, he came back to life; rose from dead. And when we pass thru VSD, proms: be w/us; and raise us fr dead, as well. And we'll live, body/soul, physclly, w/him, in hvn, forever. Vs. 17a. So you don't have be afraid/dth. Your Sav: more pwrfl than dth; defeated dth; bring you thru dth to evrlstng life.
- In corprt wrld, emplyrs might offer you a CBP; could incld: salary, hlth ins, other side perks. Lord's CBP is not just set perks for being Xian or rewrds for your behavior. Lord's CBP is all grace, top/bttm, just like Ps 103 is all grace, top/bttm; it's a list of diff ways of him saying he loves you. And it's I hope you never forget that. Vs. 2. But we forget this all time; take God's grace for grntd & live like don't care, like this list/blssngs doesn't matter to us. Look at: our sinful actions & hurtful words, less than regular ch atndnc & less then generous ch offerings, grudges & selfishness – we forget re God's bnfts all time! Don't let that hap to you. Instead, let all these bnfts prompt your praise. Ps 103 begins & ends w/praise. Ends w/: vs. 20a, 21a, 22a. And begins w/: vs. 1-2. I challenge you: commit yourself, this day, to making your life, from beg to end, a life of praise to the Lord, for his CBP, which he graciously gives you, thru Xp our Lord. In his name. Amen.

### Psalm 103

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. <sup>2</sup> Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits— <sup>3</sup> who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, <sup>4</sup> who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, <sup>5</sup> who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. <sup>6</sup> The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

<sup>7</sup> He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel: <sup>8</sup> The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. <sup>9</sup> He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; <sup>10</sup> he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. <sup>11</sup> For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; <sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

<sup>13</sup> As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; <sup>14</sup> for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. <sup>15</sup> The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; <sup>16</sup> the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. <sup>17</sup> But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children— <sup>18</sup> with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.

<sup>19</sup> The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all. <sup>20</sup> Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. <sup>21</sup> Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will. <sup>22</sup> Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the LORD, my soul.

