



**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**  
June 8, 2022  
**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT**  
**DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**  
**By Rev. Maria Szabone Berces**



Photo: Our Daily Bread

Beloved Ones,

**Today's Inspiration in one sentence**

**“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story -”**

(Psalm 107:1-2)

**Did You Know?**

**AUTHOR**

The authors of **Psalms** were David, Asaph, the Sons of Korah, Solomon, Heman, Ethan, Moses, and many unknown authors.

**DATE**

Theologians date this book between the time of Moses (probably about 1440 BC) and the time following the Babylonian exile (after 538 BC).

**IN TEN WORDS OR LESS**

Ancient Jewish songbook showcases prayers, praise, - and complaints - to God.

**DETAILS, PLEASE**

The titles “Psalms” and “Psalter” come from the Septuagint, the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament. The traditional Hebrew title is “*tehillim*”, meaning “*praises*”.

Over several centuries, God led various individuals to compose emotionally charged poems, of which 150 were later compiled into the book we know as Psalms.

The **150 psalms** gathered in the Psalms are divided into **five books** by scholars:

Book I: Ps 1-41; Book II: Ps. 42-72; Book III: Ps. 73-89; Book IV-V: Ps. 90-150.

Many of the psalms are described as “of David”, meaning they could be *by, for* or *about* Israel's great king.

Many psalms express agony of spirit on the writer's part, but nearly every psalm returns to the theme of praise to God. That's the way the book of Psalms ends: **“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.”** (150:6)

(The NIV Study Bible; Psalms; & Know Your Bible; Barbour Publishing)

**Personal Insight**

We woke for a beautiful sunny day, but if you happen to have a smart phone with weather alerts on it, you might received a severe thunderstorm watch warning for today. It's useful to be aware of such an alert, and to be able to save any possible plants on your balcony or in your garden from damages.

It would be nice to receive similar alerts for the symbolic storms of our lives, wouldn't it? Could we be better prepared if we knew what is coming?

The encouragement of today's meditation below is that whether our intuitions warn us about perils or an allegorical storm catches us absolutely unprepared, we have a God to whom we can turn in every challenge, pain, loss and grief. We can remember, and tell those times, when we received strength, comfort, deliverance, and healing. For the experience of the Psalmist is true: **“[the Lord] is good; his love endures forever.”** (Psalm 107:1)

Grace and peace to you all,            Rev. Maria



## HOPE CUTS THROUGH STORMS

*He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.*

Psalm 107:29

### READ Psalm 107:23–32

In the spring of 2021, several storm-chasers recorded videos and took photos of a rainbow next to a tornado in Texas. In one video, long stalks of wheat in a field bent under the power of the whirling winds. A brilliant rainbow cut across the gray skyline and arched toward the twister. Bystanders in another video stood on the side of the road and watched the symbol of hope standing firm beside the twisting funnel-shaped cloud.

In Psalm 107, the psalmist offers hope and encourages us to turn to God during difficult times. He describes some who were in the middle of a storm, “at their wits’ end” (v. 27). “Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress” (v. 28).

God understands His children will sometimes struggle to feel hopeful when life feels like a storm. We need reminders of His faithfulness, especially when the horizon looks dark and tumultuous.

Whether our storms come as substantial obstacles in our lives, as emotional turmoil, or as mental stress, God can still our storms “to a whisper” and guide us to a place of refuge (vv. 29–30). Though we may not experience relief in our preferred way or time, we can trust God to keep the promises He’s given in Scripture. His enduring hope will cut through any storm.

By **Xochitl Dixon**

### REFLECT & PRAY

**Loving God, thank You for being my hope-giver no matter what’s going on in my life. Amen.**

When have you struggled to feel hopeful during a storm in your life? How has God given you reminders of His promises through Scripture and His people when you needed a burst of hope?

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Psalm 107 is a song of thanksgiving (vv. 1, 31) celebrating God as the loving and merciful Deliverer, Savior, Protector, and Provider of people in crisis (see vv. 2, 41). Citing four groups of people in various situations of trouble and distress (vv. 4, 10, 17, 23), the psalmist describes how God had redeemed and rescued them from adversity, bondage, foolish ways, danger at sea, and ultimately death. God will save those who turn to Him for help (v. 41). The psalmist calls on the worshiper to “give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind.” This refrain occurs in verses 8, 15, 21, and 31. Highlighting God’s sovereignty and mighty power (vv. 33–42), the psalmist closes his song with an invitation: “Let the one who is wise heed these things and ponder the loving deeds of the Lord” (v. 43). - By: **K. T. Sim**

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