

**May 31**

**Scriptures:** Read Psalms 105 & 106

**Key Verse:** “He has remembered His covenant forever...” (Psalm 105:8)

### **Overview**

Psalms 105 and 106 are historical psalms that go together as a pair. In the former, God’s marvelous and gracious deeds are emphasized. In the latter, Israel’s ingratitude and disobedience are the focus. These two historical psalms would have been for congregational use. The people of Israel would always be reminded of God’s goodness to them, yet warned not to behave disgracefully as had their forefathers. It was probably written during the period of the exile, when the first of the captives were returning to Jerusalem (106:46-47; Ezra 9:9; Ezra or Nehemiah are possible candidates for authorship).

Psalm 105 begins by a detailed description of what it means to praise the Lord, which includes speaking about Him as a witness to others (105:1-5). This psalm praises God for His faithfulness in fulfilling His promise to Abraham. It is addressed to the “seed of Abraham” (105:6), the chosen people who are recipients of His covenant, yet it is relevant to Gentile believers as well who, through faith in Jesus, are truly the sons of Abraham (Galatians 3:7; Romans 9:6-8; John 1:12,13). We can learn more about God and His character from the history of the children of Israel (1 Cor. 10:6, 11). God was faithful to His covenant with Abraham in bringing them into the Promised Land (105:8-11; Gen. 13:15-16; 15:18; Deut. 7:8,9), just as He was faithful to fulfill His promise of sending the Messiah from the seed of Abraham. Therefore, we who serve and love Him today can be confident that He will always remain faithful to us, His elect, and bring us into our eternal inheritance.

The psalmist paints the positive side of their history in showing how God providentially cared for His people (cf. Deut. 32:8-14). He rebuked nations and kings, and even worked in nature to preserve His people (105:14-16). The main emphasis is God’s great deliverance of His people from bondage in Egypt when He sent the horrible plagues against the Egyptians so His people might go free and that He might prove Himself as the only true God (105:26-36; 106:8). With great joy, He brought them out (105:43), and with many miracles, God guided, protected, and sustained His people in the wilderness. He provided bread from heaven (manna) and water from the Rock, both of which symbolized the spiritual sustenance that Jesus brings (cf. 1 Cor. 10:4; John 6:31-35, 48-51; 7:37,38). The climax of the account is when God fulfilled His promise by giving them Canaan, in which they enjoyed the fruit of the Gentile’s labour (105:44; Josh. 24:13).

With the privileges of the covenant, however, come an obligation and a responsibility. The children of Israel were to worship Him and obey Him (105:45; Deut. 4:4-8); but, in contrast to God’s faithfulness (Psalm 105), we see in Psalm 106 that they were not faithful in keeping the covenant. The psalmist speaks from a repentant heart, showing the negative side of Israel’s history. From the onset they rebelled, forgot His mercies and miracles, lusted, murmured, and tested God. They complained and had selfish desires, which God satisfied by sending the quail; yet because of their indulgence, they had leanness in their souls (106:14,15). This can happen

today to people who are materialistic and set their hearts on the luxuries of this world; their souls suffer malnourishment.

They continually angered the Lord, but because of his great mercy, they were never punished to the extent they deserved. When they sinned with the golden calf, “they changed their glory” for an idol! (106:20). God is a jealous God. He will not share the glory that is due Him alone (cf. Isa. 42:8; Rom. 1:23). Idolatry takes many forms that are still prevalent today, and God’s people must guard that they never glorify anything or anyone above God.

The people of God were to reflect His character and His light and be holy, pure, and undefiled, that they might be witnesses for Him to the heathen. However, the opposite happened. The heathen influenced them and became a snare to them. They fell into the same horrible sins for which the Canaanites in the land had been cast out. They became defiled and the land was polluted (106:37-39), so God cast them out as well. They went into the Captivity, but still God heard their cries and showed them unmerited favour and mercy (e.g. Daniel, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah). The psalmist concludes his lengthy confession with a request for continued mercy and restoration. Truly, as the historical examples prove, our Lord is abundant in longsuffering mercy, which He still shows, even to this generation, and for it we, like the psalmist, must remember to give Him thanks.

## **Prayer**

Thank You, Father, for being so patient with us when we grieve Your heart through our vain pursuits and foolish pride. Help us to tear down any idols in our lives that have taken priority over our relationship. May nothing hinder our daily walk with You.