



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



# The Holy Book of Psalms

Psalm 100

Metropolitan Youssef



# Introduction

- This Psalm is titled *A Psalm of Thanksgiving*, and it is the only Psalm that bears this title
- According to the Septuagint and the Coptic versions, it came as: *of David about confession*
- And according to St. Augustine: *A Psalm of Confession*
- He comments on the title and says, “The title of this Psalm is, ‘A Psalm of confession.’ The verses are few, but big with great subjects; may the seed bring forth within your hearts, the barn be prepared for the Lord’s harvest.”



# Introduction

- Psalm 100 is supposed to have been used when peace offerings for thanksgivings were offered up, Leviticus 7:11
- It has been used in the daily service of the Synagogue, except upon certain festivals
- It speaks of an invitation to the whole earth to know and to worship God
- It is a Messianic Psalm, calling humanity to experience the joy in the gospel of Christ
- The scope of the Psalm is to exhort the Gentiles to praise the Messiah, to serve and worship Him, considering His goodness and mercy, truth and faithfulness





# Introduction

- Verses 1,2, & 4 of this Psalm are an echo of Psalm 95:1-2; and verse 3 is an eco of Psalm 95:7
- It is a short Psalm of five verses
- These five verses roar with praise, using a series of imperative verbs: shout (verse 1), serve (verse 2), enter (verses 4), praise (verse 4), bless (verse 4)
- Taken together, these commands compel the congregation to participate in a high liturgical singing in a grand procession into God's temple



# Introduction

- It is with good reason that many sing this Psalm very frequently for it is very proper to express and to kindle reverend and devout affections towards God in our approach to Him in prayers and worship
- According to Eusebius of Caesarea, this Psalm is the calling of the Gentiles
- And according to St. Athanasius it is a Psalm of rejoicing



# Introduction

## Psalm Outline

- All Nations are Exhorted to Praise the Lord 100:1-2
- He is our Creator and Shepherd 100:3
- The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



# All Nations are Exhorted to Praise the Lord 100:1-2



- Unlike the several previous Psalms, Psalm 100 does not begin with a declaration of God's sovereignty or character
- It begins with the simple and direct exhortation to *all you lands* to praise God with *a joyful shout*; this sets the tone for the Psalm
- According to St. Augustine, shouting is not uttering bare words; but is an expression by a kind of mind filled with an abundance of joy, and feelings of gladness with no limit
- This is a call to cheerfulness and rejoicing—to the kind of energetic praise that grows within to the point that it can no longer be contained

# All Nations are Exhorted to Praise the Lord 100:1-2



- This is a call to the nations, extending far beyond Israel's borders
- All are invited; the Psalm is based on the unity of the human race; on the fact that there is one God and Father of all
- What is it that demands such rejoicing?
- Why should earth be called to exultation and gladness?
- Because God chose to humble Himself to become the meek shepherd to gather, in His mercy, the wandering nations, the straying people, the tribes scattered far, as lost sheep into one fold; as Christ cries out, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."* (John 10:11)



# All Nations are Exhorted to Praise the Lord 100:1-2



- The whole earth is invited to *serve the Lord*
- Those who *serve the Lord* should do it *with gladness*
- God calls upon humanity to worship Him, not as a duty, we are committed to do, but to enjoy His presence, with our hearts filled with joy
- He is our Lord, and therefore He is to be served
- He is our gracious Lord, and therefore to be served with joy
- True worship bring joy to the heart
- *Come before His presence*, to His throne with thankfulness for all the received mercies

# All Nations are Exhorted to Praise the Lord 100:1-2



- Worship with singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; Psalm 95:2
- St. Augustine says, “All service is full of bitterness, all who are tied down to a servile condition serve and murmur. Be not afraid that God’s service will be such; there will be in it no sighing, no mourning, no wrath. None will ask to be sold from thence, for it is sweet to know that we are all ransomed. It is great happiness to be a servant in that house, even if tied. The Lord’s service is free, because not necessity but love serves therein, ‘For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another’ (Galatians 5:13)”

# He is our Creator and Shepherd

## 100:3



- The praise that comes to God from His people and all *lands* should be mindful
- We have many reasons to worship the Lord and the reasons begin with the recognition that *He is God*
- The only living and true God and the idols are vanity
- They have no claim to worship; but God is the Creator of all
- Above all, the psalmist asserts a complete belonging to God: *He who has made us*
- An affirmation full of both pride and humility, since people are presented as *sheep*



# He is our Creator and Shepherd

## 100:3



- The next reason to worship God is in appropriate recognition of His work as Creator
- The idea that we could make *ourselves* is illogical, and we should worship the One *who has made us*
- Every created thing, therefore, is a proof of the existence of God; the immensity of the universe is an illustration of the greatness of His power
- Under the New Covenant, the believer has a second and greater reason for praise: he or she is a *new creation* in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)

# He is our Creator and Shepherd

## 100:3



- Here he also talks about the Lord Jesus, whom the Jews assumed not to be God, *Know that the Lord, He is God*
- St. Augustine says, “Think not meanly of that Lord, for though you crucified Him, scourged Him, spat upon Him, crowned Him with thorns, clad Him in a robe of scorn, hung Him on a tree, pierced Him with nails, smote Him with a lance, set guards at His Sepulcher, He is God.”
- *“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”* (John 1:3)

# He is our Creator and Shepherd

## 100:3



- And as we read in Isaiah 43:6-7, *“Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth—Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”*
- St. Augustine also says, “We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture’ ...He forsook the ninety-nine, and went to search for the one lost. And when He found him, He put him on His shoulders, and saved him with His blood. That Shepherd fearlessly died for the sake of His flock; He, by whose resurrection, He acquired His flock.”



# The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



- Now the psalmist pictures the people of God from *all you lands*, entering through the *gates* and into the *courts* of the place of worship
- As God's people approach, we should do so *with thanksgiving*, recognizing how much God has done for us
- According to St. Ambrose, the invitation to *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving*, and *His courts with praise* is the description of the baptized as they approach the altar
- Verse 4 also point to the days of Messiah when all the sacrifices of the Law will be done and will have no place under the New Covenant

# The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



- There will no more animal sacrifices but thanksgiving and praise
- St. Augustine teaches us that repentance must be the outset of the service of God, into whose *gates* we enter with confession of sins, not attempting to begin in the language of praise till in the advance of our spiritual improvement we penetrate into His *courts*
- Other Fathers consider the *gates* to be the Sacraments of the Church, especially Holy Baptism, as the entrance of the Church, each Sacrament is preceded by confession of sins
- According to St. Jerome the Lord has called Himself the Door

# The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



- Jesus also said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* (John 14:6)
- St. Jerome explains that these gates are also the Apostles and other holy teachers, His messengers, to bring men to Him, by whom, therefore, they enter into Him, making confession first and renunciation of all their sins in the time of their ignorance
- Under the New Covenant, not only are the *gates* and *courts* open, but even the way to the Holy of Holies is widely open (Hebrews 10:19)



# The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



- St. Augustine says, “Think not that you faint in praising Him. Your praise of Him is like food: the more you praise Him, the more you acquire strength, and He whom you praise becomes the more sweet.”
- Thanks and praise are right in recognition of God’s *goodness*
- He *is good* in His plans, good in His grace, good in His forgiveness, good in His covenant, and good in every aspect of His being
- He is not a being of mere power, He is not merely the Creator; but He is benevolent compassionate and is, therefore, worthy of praise

# The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



- This short Psalm ends with God's unending *mercy* and *truth*
- These are *everlasting* reasons to give thanks and praise to God
- As His nature is eternal, so His mercy, arising from His goodness, must be everlasting
- Whatsoever He has promised must be fulfilled
- *endures to all generations*, Because the promise He made to the Patriarchs He fulfilled in their descendants, by coming in person, no longer in type and prophecy
- Because His words shall never pass away, even when heaven and earth are passed away (Matthew 24:35)

# The What and Why of Giving Thanks 100:4-5



- *His mercy is everlasting*, He will not stop being merciful
- According to St. Augustine it is because He keeps to the uttermost in this world and the next the promise He has given to His disciples of bestowing everlasting blessedness
- He is the good Shepherd, that has laid down His life for the sheep
- And the good Samaritan, that pours in the wine and oil of His love
- While He was on earth, Jesus, “*went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.*” (Acts 10:38)





# Discussion

- What reasons does the psalmist give to praise God?
- What does it mean to serve God?
- This Psalm describes us as “*sheep*”. What is it about sheep that make this analogy so good when describing God’s people?
- Who are the ones who can legitimately worship God, according to this Psalm?