



# EVER LASTING



## *Psalm 103*

### PREVIEW

From our perspective, it can seem quite unreasonable to forgive someone over and over again. It's irrational to view each day as a new start with no recollection of past offenses, no matter the severity, and lavish the offenders with gifts they do not deserve. And in our humanistic limitations, it is nearly impossible to imagine a truly unconditional love that knows no bounds or conditions. Yet, in every single day, we are met with that kind of unfathomable grace and mercy by our Father and Creator. He sees us clearly, knows us fully, and still loves us endlessly.

### PRAISE

Psalm 103 speaks of the pure, unrivaled goodness of God. This passage of Scripture reminds us why we joyously live to bless His name, simply because He is who He is. He is our Savior and Redeemer, who pulled us out of darkness and gave us hope. He is our friend and Father whose comfort is always near. He is our peace, our safe place, our provider and miracle-worker. And perhaps the greatest of all, He is rich in everlasting grace and mercy regardless of our unworthiness. We are granted unmerited favor and unwavering forgiveness of all our faults. Neither of these are earned through our goodness and works. His grace and mercy are gifts given solely because of His selfless character and divine compassion for His children.

### PARABLE

We could assume that David's motive in writing this psalm was just to paint a picture of God's sweet lovingkindness toward His children. I wouldn't necessarily argue with that assumption, but I believe there was more to it than that.

Read Psalm 103:17–18: “But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.”

It is important to note how David took the time to emphasize that the extent of our obedience will determine our blessing. Our God is generous on a level we can only strive to reach. There is no question about whether or not He desires to pour out blessings and the gift of salvation. But just as much as He is generous, He also is a righteous God. It's our obedience and devotion to the Lord's Word that gives us access to the best that He intends for us. Praise from our lips has little value if we are not praising Him with our lives. Let us celebrate His goodness not only with our words, but by the continuous refinement of our character and the sacrifice of our will.

## PRESENT

Something truly miraculous happens when we choose to live our lives to bless the Lord. There's a beautiful exchange: when our blessings go up to Him, He is ever so graciously pouring blessings back down on us. Our faithfulness is met with much greater faithfulness; our blessings with much greater blessings. We can rest in the knowledge that our Father is gentle in dealing with our weaknesses, and never fails to renew our strength. His love for us is from everlasting to everlasting.

## PRACTICE

Read Psalm 103:12. How far is the East from the West? It's an immeasurable distance of two ends stretching infinitely in opposite directions—the two ends will never meet. That's how far God separates us from our sins.

What would happen if we gave what we have been given? What if we sought to extend the same kind of understanding and compassion to those around us? It's amazing how the simple act of undeserved forgiveness can change the world of the offender, offended, and even the outside observers. Once we can wholly recognize and accept the depth of His grace and mercy to us, it is our responsibility to then show the world God's goodness through our own gracious actions.

## PRAY

Lord, there are so many things I could thank You for. But in this moment, I just want to say thank You for being who You are. No matter my circumstances, no matter my mistakes, You have been and will always be gracious and merciful to me. Let me never forget how blessed I am to simply know You and be known by You. You are the God of all.

## PLUS

We could never count the infinite ways God has blessed us. But sadly, we don't often take the time to thank Him for all He's done. Think about it: how many times each day do we take God's provisions for granted? Take some time today (and every day!) to reflect and thank the Lord for all He has provided for you over your lifetime. It is beyond your ability to comprehend how He has made a way when the situation was impossible, how He led you to growth through trials you thought weakened you and all the gifts that came at the perfect time when you didn't know what you needed. Now ask yourself how you can live a life that more intentionally blesses Him as a way to honor how He has so greatly blessed you.