

GOD'S COVENANT IN THE PSALMS**Psalm 106**

Memory Verse: *Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!* (Ps. 106:1 ESV)

Background Helps:

Psalm 106 is one of the historical psalms. In verse form, the psalmist narrates the dismal history of Israel's rebellion and unfaithfulness in contrast with the LORD's persistent faithfulness and steadfast love. He tells the story of Israel's rebellion beginning at the Red Sea (vv. 6-12), through their wilderness wanderings (vv. 13-33), and even after they entered the Promised Land (vv. 34-43). Nevertheless, the LORD was faithful to them and saved them repeatedly (vv. 8-12, 43-46). Why? Because he remembered the covenant he had made with his people: verse 45. On the basis of God's covenant love, the psalmist prays for the LORD to save his people once again, both personally (vv. 4-5) and corporately (v. 47), this time from their exile among the nations.


A few interesting notes: (1) Verses 1 and 47-48 are quoted from an earlier psalm found in 1 Chronicles 16 (see vv. 34-36). (2) The mention of Phinehas in verses 28-31 is a reference to an event recorded in Numbers 25. Notice in Numbers 25:10-13 that, because of Phinehas's zeal for the LORD, the LORD made a covenant of a perpetual priesthood with him and his descendants. You could do a concordance study of Phinehas and explore how God kept this covenant promise to this grandson of Aaron.

Lesson Helps:

Here are a few lesson tips:

- This historical psalm gives you the opportunity to do some Old Testament review from the time of the Exodus through the exile. Of course, it will mostly be a review of events illustrating Israel's unfaithfulness, but this dark history can be contrasted with God's steadfast love and faithfulness to his covenant.
- You will notice that not all the events in the psalm are narrated in chronological order. Perhaps you could list the main events on the board in a scrambled order. Then see if your class can number them in the right order.
- Be sure to write out a lesson aim. For example: My students will learn about Israel's unfaithfulness and God's faithfulness to his covenant in Psalm 106, so that they will ask the Lord to restore them from their own spiritual "exile." Pray accordingly at the end of class.
- Another option: Develop a lesson and write a lesson aim based on the story of Phinehas and God's special covenant with him. See the background helps above.

Home Assignment:

 Read Isaiah 9:1-7; 11; 55:1-5; Jeremiah 23:1-8; 30:1-9; 33:14-26.

 Memorize Isaiah 9:6 ESV.