

Psalm 33

- Psalm of praise and rejoicing in God and in his love
- Central theme:
 - God's *steadfast love* (Hebrew: *hesed*)
 - Resulting in God's trust of his people
 - God's *steadfast love* which surrounds those who love him, also fills the earth!
 - Ps 33 is a response to Ps 32
 - The psalm of repentance and forgiveness
 - Grace through God's *steadfast love*

Psalm 33

- God is sovereign over **all** the world
 - (The word “all” is in vv. 6, 8, 13, 14 and 15)*
 - Creation vv 6-9
 - The nations and peoples (vv. 10-12)
 - Humanity in general (vv. 13-15)
 - Human symbols of power (vv. 16-17)
 - Those who explicitly acknowledge their hope in God’s steadfast love (vv. 18-19)

Ps 33:1-3 - Praise the Lord

1 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.

Praise befits the upright.

2 Praise the Lord with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings.

3 Sing to him a new song;
play skilfully on the strings,
with loud shouts.

- Who: Those who are upright / dependent on God
 - Offering of self to God
 - Motivation over skill
- What: Singing, instruments, loud shouts

Ps 33:4-5 – Why?

4 For the word of the Lord is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.

5 He loves righteousness and justice;

the earth is full of the *steadfast love* of the Lord.

- God's word and work
 - God's word = upright
 - God's work = Faithfulness, righteousness and justice
- Result: The world is full of God's *steadfast love* (hesed)

v5b is the crucial verse of the psalm: everything that follows is an explanation of it.

Ps 33:6-9 – God’s love: Origin of the world

- 6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
and all their host by the breath of his mouth.
- 7 He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;
he put the deeps in storehouses.
- 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
- 9 For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.

- Creation:
God’s word
 - Breath of his mouth (v6)
 - He spoke into being (v9)
- v7-8 Allusion to Exodus
 - v7: Ex 15:8
 - v8: Ex 14:31

Ps 33:10-12 – God’s love in history

10 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

11 The counsel of the Lord stands for ever,

the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

12 Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord,

the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.

- Focus on God’s will in history
 - Human counsel vs God’s counsel
 - Human thoughts vs God’s plans
- God chooses the people of his heritage
 - Happy / blessed

Ps 33:13-15 – God’s love for individuals

13 The Lord looks down from
heaven;

he sees all humankind.

14 From where he sits enthroned he
watches

all the inhabitants of the earth

—

15 he who fashions the hearts of
them all,

and observes all their deeds.

- God is sovereign
- But God knows everyone
- He made everyone
- He watches over them

Ps 33:16-17 – Limitation of human power

16 A king is not saved by his
great army;

a warrior is not delivered
by his great strength.

17 The war horse is a vain hope
for victory,

and by its great might it
cannot save.

- Even the most might person (King)
- Or the most might weapon (War horse)
- Cannot save / deliver
- Only God can

Ps 33:18-19 – God's love gives hope

18 Truly the eye of the Lord is
on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his
steadfast love,
19 to deliver their soul from
death,
and to keep them alive in
famine.

- Only God can save
- And only those are saved who
 - Fear him
 - And hope on his steadfast love
- For live and death!

Ps 33:20-22 – People trust in God's love

20 Our soul waits for the
Lord;
he is our help and shield.

21 Our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his
holy name.

22 Let your *steadfast love*, O
Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

- Waiting in surety
 - Being glad in his holy name
 - Because God's *steadfast love*
- God's love is the foundation
- Through which Jesus Christ came

Take aways

- Ps 33 proclaims what is at the heart of the Old and New Testament
- God rules the world!
 - Not humanity, although we (the world) may think so
- The real power behind the universe, human history, personal experience is the *steadfast love* of God, which fills the earth
 - Not revealed by God's absolute enforcement of his will
 - But by God's forgiveness of sin (Ps 32)
 - Ultimately given to humanity in the sacrifice of his Son Jesus Christ