Psalm 100 — Doxology in the Psalms

1.0 Introducing Psalm 100

- Psalm 100 is the last of the theocratic psalms (Psalms 93–100).
- This is the only psalm in the Psalter with a heading saying that it is “A Psalm for Thanksgiving.”
- Psalm 100 has been a favorite for centuries. It is sung to the tune known as “Old 100th” (= “Doxology,” which was originally the tune for Psalm 134 in the Genevan Psalter of 1551).
  ✓ William Kethe (d. June 6, 1594, Dorsetshire, England) wrote the most popular metrical version of the psalm. He was a Scottish minister who fled persecution under Queen Mary (Tudor). During his exile in Geneva, Switzerland, he helped translate the Geneva Bible (1560).
  ✓ Louis Bourgeois (b. 1510, Paris) composed the tune for Kethe’s paraphrase of Psalm 100. He followed John Calvin to Geneva in 1541, where he became a cantor at the Church of St. Pierre, and edited the Genevan Psalter of 1561. At one point, he was jailed for modifying some well-known tunes—church musicians have always had their challenges.

2.0 Reading Psalm 100 (NAU)

100:1 A Psalm for Thanksgiving.

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.

100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness;
Come before Him with joyful singing.

100:3 Know that the LORD Himself is God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
100:4  Enter His gates with thanksgiving
And His courts with praise.
Give thanks to Him,
bless His name.

100:5  For the LORD is good;
His lovingkindness is everlasting
And His faithfulness to all generations.

3.0  Understanding Psalm 100

3.1  Outline
I. Worship the LORD with Gladness (vv. 1-3)
II. Worship the LORD with Gratitude (vv. 4-5)

3.2  Notes

• Compared with Psalm 95

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm 100</th>
<th>Psalm 95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v. 1: Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth</td>
<td>v. 1: Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 2: Come before Him with joyful singing</td>
<td>v. 2: Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 4: Enter His gates with thanksgiving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 3: Know that the LORD Himself is God</td>
<td>v. 3: For the LORD is a great God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 3: It is He who has made us</td>
<td>v. 6: Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. 3: We are His people and the sheep of His pasture</td>
<td>v. 7: And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand</td>
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</tbody>
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- Jewish commentators look at Psalms 95–100 as being the core of the theocratic psalms and various traditions assign them for reciting during the six days prior to the Sabbath.

- vv. 1-2 An Echo of Psalm 98:4
  - Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth;
  - Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises.

- v. 1 “Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth”
  - “The joyful noise is not the special contribution of the tone-deaf, still less of the convivial, but the equivalent in worship to the homage-shout or fanfare (98:6) to a king, as in 95:1 or the almost identical 66:1.”—Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73–150*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 356.
• v. 2 “Serve the LORD with gladness”
  ■ Compare Deuteronomy 28:47.
  ■ Contrast with Psalm 97:7.

• v. 3 “Know that the LORD Himself is God”
  ■ This is the middle of Psalm 100’s seven imperatives.
  ■ Some commentators make verse 3 the middle stanza of the psalm.
  ■ Only those who truly know God can come into His real presence.
  ■ The same expression occurs in Deuteronomy 4:35, 39.
  ■ “The LORD Himself is God” could also be translated as “the LORD alone is God.”

• v. 3 “and not we ourselves”
  ■ The meaning of the text as it stands would be that God chooses His people by grace, not by their choice and works.
    ✓ Support comes from the ancient Greek Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, the Syriac Peshitta, and a recent view of the Masoretic marginal notation called *Kethiv-Qere*.
  ■ Many modern translations have “and we are His.”
    ✓ In the Hebrew, “not” and “His” sound the same (homonyms), although they are spelled differently (e.g., like English “through” and “threw”).
    ✓ Support comes from Jerome, a number of medieval Hebrew manuscripts, and medieval rabbis.

• v. 4 “with thanksgiving”
  ■ In the synagogues Psalm 100 is never recited on the Sabbath or on feast days, because thanksgiving offerings could not be offered on those days according to the rabbinic customs.

• v. 4 “Give thanks . . . bless”
  ■ These two verbs occur together only here and Psalm 145:10.
  ■ “Bless” means to show gratitude to and respect for God.

• vv. 4-5 “Give thanks to Him, . . . For the LORD is good”
  ■ This is a standard formulation of praise and thanksgiving that commences Psalms 106, 107, 118, and 136.
  ■ “The LORD is good, because” He delivers His people and makes “goodness” possible in their lives.
4.0 Singing Psalm 100

All People That on Earth Do Dwell
(Tune: “Doxology”)

1 All people that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell; Come ye before Him and rejoice.

2 The Lord, ye know, is God indeed; Without our aid He did us make; We are His folk, He doth us feed, And for His sheep He doth us take.

3 O enter then His gates with praise; Approach with joy His courts unto; Praise, laud, and bless His Name always, For it is seemly so to do.

4 For why? the Lord our God is good; His mercy is for ever sure; His truth at all times firmly stood, And shall from age to age endure.

5 To Father, Son and Holy Ghost, The God Whom Heaven and earth adore, From men and from the angel host Be praise and glory evermore.

— Words by William Kethe; Music by Louis Bourgeois (1561)

He Has Made Me Glad

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart, I will enter His courts with praise. I will say “this is the day that the Lord has made” I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad
He has made me glad
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

— Leona von Brethorst, © 1976 Maranatha Music

5.0 Praying Psalm 100

• Help me serve and worship You with gladness, Lord. [v. 2]
• Father, help me to realize I am Your sheep. [v. 3]
• Thank You, Lord, for all You have done and are doing for me. [v. 4]
• Father, You are good and faithful—how I praise You! [v. 5]

6.0 Applying Psalm 100

• We must serve/worship our great God with joy.
• Only those who acknowledge His deity can offer acceptable praise and service.
• Gratitude and thanksgiving must abound in our worship.