

# First Light

"How much do I love you?", said the father to his young son as he held two fingers about an inch apart. The little boy giggled and shook his head "NO!". "Do I love you THIS much?", said the father as he placed one hand about a foot from the other. The little boy giggled again, "NO!", gaining some excitement at the increasing measure. "Ok, do I love you THIS much?". He stretched each arm to the side as far as they could go and the little boy shouted with delight, "YES!!!", laughing as his father then swooped over and wrapped his arms around his tiny son in a tight hug, giggling at the game they had just played. This was a nightly ritual – and it has its genesis in the writings of the man after God's own heart.

In Psalms 103, the writer takes us on a special trip to the throne of God with angels, servants, and heavenly beings. This unique glimpse into the storehouse of God's endless love, compassion and forgiveness is one unlike any recorded in the Bible and describes these most amazing and rich attributes in extreme language. David is using all his verbal might to help us see the kind of God we worship and trust. Maybe it's time to refresh our minds and consider how important we are to our God and Father, who truly loves you loves us THIS much.

“... Praise the Lord, my soul;  
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.  
... Praise the Lord, my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits—  
3 who forgives all your  
sins and heals all your diseases,  
4 who redeems your  
life from the pit and crowns you with love and  
compassion,  
5 who satisfies your desires with good things  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle  
6 The Lord works righteousness  
and justice for all the oppressed.  
7 He made known his ways to Moses,  
his deeds to the people of Israel:  
8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious,  
slow to anger, abounding in love.  
9 He will not always accuse,  
nor will he harbor his anger forever;  
10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve  
or repay us according to our iniquities.

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11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his love for those who fear him;

12 as far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

13 As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;

14 for he knows how we are formed,  
he remembers that we are dust.

15 The life of mortals is like grass,  
they flourish like a flower of the field;

16 the wind blows over it and it is gone,  
and its place remembers it no more.

17 But from everlasting to everlasting  
the Lord's love is with those who fear him,  
and his righteousness with their children's  
children—

18 with those who keep his covenant  
and remember to obey his precepts.

19 The Lord has established  
his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules overall.

20 Praise the Lord, you his angels,  
you mighty ones who do his bidding,  
who obey his word.

21 Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts,  
you his servants who do his will.

22 Praise the Lord, all his works  
everywhere in his dominion.

Praise the Lord, my soul.