

Dr. David Emanuel, Exodus Psalms, Session 4, Psalm 106 – Standing in the Gap Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Emanuel, Psalms, Session 4, Psalm 106 – Standing in the Gap, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. David Emanuel's lecture analyzes Psalm 106, focusing on its unique characteristics within the Exodus Psalms. Unlike previous psalms in the series, Psalm 106 is a **lament** featuring **confessional prayer** and **active human characters** like Moses and Phineas, who act as intercessors. The psalm recounts Israel's history, **emphasizing their repeated failings**, yet also highlighting God's enduring compassion. Emanuel explores the psalm's **literary features**, including allusions to other biblical texts and possible scribal revisions, and suggests a likely **exilic dating** based on its content and concluding plea for national deliverance. Finally, the lecture discusses the psalm's placement within the Psalter and its thematic connections to surrounding psalms.

**2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Emanuel, Session 4 – Double click icon to play in Windows
media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and
click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Psalms &
Wisdom → Psalms).**



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3. Briefing Document: Emanuel, Exodus Psalms, Session 4, Psalm 106 – Standing in the Gap

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Emanuel_EN_Session04_Psalm106.pdf":

Briefing Document: Analysis of Psalm 106

Overview: This document analyzes Dr. David Emanuel's lecture on Psalm 106, focusing on its unique characteristics within the context of other Exodus Psalms (78, 105, 136) and its theological significance. Psalm 106, titled "Standing in the Gap," is presented as a lament centered on intercession, highlighting Israel's repeated failures and the role of key individuals in seeking God's mercy.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Psalm 106 as a Lament:

- Unlike Psalms 78, 105, and 136, Psalm 106 is identified as a lament, a genre where the writer cries out to God for help during a period of distress.
- This changes how the Exodus story is used, now through the lens of suffering and a plea for divine intervention.
- Quote: "It is a lament that's one of the genres according to Hermann Gunkel. So, it's a psalm in which the psalmist or the people at the time of its writing were in a period of distress and they are crying out to God for help."

1. Uniqueness Among Exodus Psalms:

- While sharing the Exodus narrative, Psalm 106 is distinctive due to its focus on Israel's rebellion and sin, contrasting with the overwhelmingly positive portrayals in other Psalms.
- It features active and complex characters, particularly Moses and Phineas, who intercede for the people, a feature absent in the other Psalms.
- Quote: "Each psalmist has rewritten the Exodus very specifically according to details and according to a program that he wants to promote. So, they are very unique contrary to what people think."
- It is also framed around an individual's confessional prayer with a strong sense of "I" and "me," which is not present in the other exodus Psalms.

- Quote: "Something else that's very, very particular in this psalm is that it is centered or it is framed around an individual's confessional prayer. The notion of the I, of the me, of the self is very much pronounced in this psalm and we do not have that in any of the other Exodus psalms."

1. **Historical Scope and Dating:**

- The Psalm's scope extends from the sea crossing to the exile, overlapping with Psalm 105 but including events that follow the initial conquest.
- It is likely written during the exile (around 587 BCE), evidenced by the plea for national deliverance: "Save us O Lord our God and gather us from among the nations."
- The reference to being gathered from the nations points to the exile.
- Quote: "For this psalm itself, we've got this verse here, the last verse, apart from the doxology, Save us O Lord our God and gather us from among the nations. This statement here, not just myself, but a lot of scholarly consensus has, was probably written during the exile in 587."

1. **Structure of the Psalm:**

- The psalm begins with a call to remember, highlighting a personal plea for God's favor.
- It moves through God's deliverance at the sea (the high point of obedience) followed by the desert generation's repeated sins.
- These sins include: forgetting God's works, complaining, jealousy of leaders, the golden calf incident, rejection of the promised land, sin at Baal Peor, and causing Moses to sin.
- It concludes with a plea for national deliverance and is followed by a doxology.

1. **The Significance of Intercession**

- The psalm showcases key individuals, Moses and Phineas, as active intercessors, standing "in the gap" between God and the sinful people, something that does not appear in other Exodus psalms.
- Quote: "In spite of the sin, had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him and turned away his wrath from destroying them. So here we have,

and no other Exodus psalm does this, Moses, not as somebody who brings plagues, not as somebody who parts the sea, but as an intercessor."

- This intercessory role emphasizes the psalmist's own plea and the belief that one individual can influence God's response to the nation, connecting to Daniel's confessional prayer.
- Quote: "One man is praying on behalf of the nation, not detaching himself from their sins, but interceding as part of it. This idea, this notion is very important because it explains, it helps explain why he includes some of the events that he does within the psalm."

1. **Passover Reversal & Identification with Ancestral Sin:**

- The psalmist identifies with the sins of their forefathers, similar to how participants in the Passover meal identify with the Exodus.
- Quote: "We have sinned like our fathers. We have committed iniquity. We have behaved wickedly. Now I put here that this is a Passover reversal... he's saying that I have taken part in the sins of my fathers as well. I'm as guilty as they are."
- This reinforces the psalm's confessional nature and underscores the need for God's mercy, not just for past generations but also for the present generation in exile.

1. **Literary and Textual Nuances**

- The psalmist alludes to other texts using unique phrases to connect the psalms to other sections of the Bible.
- The psalmist makes alterations to biblical narratives, like omitting Korah's name, possibly to protect his legacy, or placing the blame for the sin at Meribah on the people instead of Moses.
- The psalm utilizes creation imagery when describing the splitting of the sea.
- The text shows textual critical phenomenon like *tikkun ha-sofrim*, scribal corrections to preserve the sanctity of God's name.

1. **Theological Significance:**

- The psalm reveals God's continued compassion even after punishment, showing that God does not cease to love his people even when they sin.

- It links the Exodus story to the exilic experience and uses the past to implore God for present deliverance.
- The psalm serves as a model of intercessory prayer, highlighting the belief that one person's righteous actions can have a transformative effect.
- The active roles of Moses and Phineas as intercessors highlight the psalmist's hope, that his prayer of intercession, may have the same effect.

1. Psalm 106 in the Larger Context of the Psalter

- The position of Psalm 106 at the end of Book Four of the Psalter is significant as Book Four is often called the "Book of Moses." This book includes the only psalm attributed to Moses (Psalm 90) and has seven of the eight mentions of Moses in the psalter.
- The placement of Psalm 106 and 107 may not be a coincidence as the plea to be gathered from the nations at the end of Psalm 106, may have been responded to by God in Psalm 107 where it says, "he has redeemed from the hand of adversity and gathered from the lands." This would highlight the intentionality of the editors of the psalter.
- The theme of God as king is prominent in Book Four, portraying a time when God was the sole ruler of Israel, before the institution of a human monarchy.

Conclusion:

Psalm 106 is a complex and unique contribution to the Exodus Psalms. Unlike the other Exodus psalms, it is a lamenting confession of sin with an urgent plea for redemption. It uses the Exodus story not as a simple historical recounting but as a framework to explore themes of rebellion, intercession, and the enduring nature of God's compassion, all through the lens of exile. The psalm highlights the importance of remembering both God's acts of deliverance and the nation's failures in order to move forward, all while emphasizing the power of individual intercession.

4. Study Guide: Emanuel, Exodus Psalms, Session 1, Psalm 106 – Standing in the Gap

Psalm 106: Standing in the Gap - Study Guide

Quiz

1. How does Psalm 106 differ in tone from Psalm 105, despite both being Exodus psalms?
2. Psalm 106 presents a stark contrast to Psalm 105; where the latter emphasizes God's wondrous acts, the former focuses on Israel's repeated sins, rebellions, and failures during the same historical period. Psalm 106 is a lament, highlighting Israel's shortcomings rather than their successes.
3. What is the significance of the "I" or "me" in Psalm 106, and how does it differ from other Exodus psalms?
4. Psalm 106 is unique among the Exodus psalms because it is centered around an individual's confessional prayer, using "I," "me," and "we" to express personal responsibility and solidarity with past sins. This personal aspect is absent in the other psalms which maintain more of a community or third-person point of view.
5. According to the lecture, when is it likely that Psalm 106 was written, and what textual clue supports this?
6. Psalm 106 was likely written during the exile around 587 BCE, as evidenced by the final verses' plea to be gathered from the nations, a sentiment reflecting the dispersed state of Israel after the Babylonian conquest. The desire for regathering indicates a period of displacement.
7. What is meant by the phrase "Passover reversal" in the context of Psalm 106?
8. "Passover reversal" refers to the psalmist's confession, "we have sinned like our fathers," which contrasts with the Passover tradition where participants feel as if they personally experienced the Exodus. Instead of identifying with the freedom of the Exodus, the psalmist identifies with the sins of previous generations.
9. How does the psalmist connect the splitting of the sea with creation imagery?
10. The psalmist uses creation terminology to describe the splitting of the sea by stating it was "rebuked." This language evokes ancient creation myths where God

stilled the waters to begin his creative work; the exodus is portrayed as a kind of new creation.

11. What specific event does the psalmist use to highlight the theme of Israelite impatience and greed?
12. The psalmist references the manna and quail incident from Numbers 11, highlighting the Israelites' craving for meat and their failure to "wait for his counsel." The psalmist connects this lack of patience to both the historical event and perhaps the situation of the exiled community.
13. How does Psalm 106 alter the account of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's rebellion? Why might this be significant?
14. Psalm 106 omits Korah from the list of rebels, mentioning only Dathan and Abiram, which differs from the account in Numbers. This may be for poetic reasons or to protect Korah's name, possibly because he founded a psalm school.
15. What role does Moses play in Psalm 106 that is unique compared to other Exodus psalms?
16. Unlike other Exodus psalms where Moses is primarily a leader or miracle worker, in Psalm 106 he is depicted as an intercessor who "stood in the breach" to turn away God's wrath, which highlights the importance of intercession and sets a model for the psalmist to emulate.
17. What is *tikkun ha-sofrim*, and how does it relate to a specific verse in Psalm 106?
18. *Tikkun ha-sofrim* refers to scribal corrections made to preserve the sanctity of God's name. In Psalm 106, it appears in a verse which is altered from "they exchanged *his* glory" to "they exchanged *their* glory," in order to prevent direct association of God with the act of idolatry.
19. What is the significance of the fact that Psalm 106 closes Book Four of the Psalter?
20. Psalm 106 closes Book Four of the Psalter, which is also known as the Book of Moses, which connects it with other psalms and stories within that section. This is highlighted by the fact that it's a book with desert themes and where Moses is mentioned the most.

Answer Key

1. Psalm 106 is a lament focusing on Israel's sins and failures, while Psalm 105 is a hymn of praise celebrating God's wondrous acts. This difference highlights the varied interpretations of the Exodus narrative within the Psalms.
2. The "I" in Psalm 106 signifies a personal confessional prayer, where the psalmist identifies with the sins of past generations; this is a unique feature, as other Exodus psalms focus on collective action or third-person accounts.
3. Psalm 106 was likely written during the exile (587 BCE), supported by the concluding verse's plea for national regathering, suggesting the psalmist wrote in a time of national dispersal and seeking deliverance.
4. "Passover reversal" describes how the psalmist identifies with the sins of his ancestors, unlike the Passover meal where people feel like participants in the Exodus liberation. This expresses a deep sense of national guilt.
5. The psalmist employs creation terminology, specifically "rebuked" to describe the splitting of the sea, which creates a link between the Exodus miracle and God's power over primordial chaos, showing a divine act of deliverance and new creation.
6. The psalmist uses the manna and quail incident to underscore Israel's impatience and greed. The phrase "they did not wait for his counsel" is added, showing a lack of faith and highlighting a persistent struggle with obedience.
7. Psalm 106 omits Korah from the rebellion narrative, possibly for poetic balance or to protect his name as a founder of a psalm school. This omission suggests a deliberate alteration by the psalmist, possibly to shield a particular tradition from negative association.
8. Moses, in Psalm 106, is not just a leader but an intercessor who turns away God's wrath at the golden calf; this is unique, as other Exodus psalms don't emphasize this role of Moses' as a bridge between God and the people.
9. *Tikkun ha-sofrim* are scribal corrections to protect God's name, evident in Psalm 106 where "his glory" was changed to "their glory" to avoid directly associating God with the act of idolatry. This highlights the scribes' reverence for God.
10. Psalm 106 concludes Book Four of the Psalter, known as the Book of Moses. This placement links it with other psalms in this section that focus on Moses, the desert, and the concept of God as king, creating a cohesive thematic unit.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the use of intercession in Psalm 106, focusing on the roles of Moses and Phineas. How do these figures serve as models for the psalmist, and what does this reveal about the psalm's purpose?
2. Compare and contrast the portrayal of Israel's behavior in Psalm 106 with its depiction in other Exodus psalms like 78, 105, and 136. What specific choices does the psalmist make in crafting this account, and what does it reveal about his theological perspective?
3. Discuss the significance of the individual "I" perspective in Psalm 106 in contrast to the collective narratives of other Exodus psalms. How does the psalmist's personal confession contribute to the psalm's overall message and purpose?
4. Examine how the psalmist reinterprets key events from the Pentateuch in Psalm 106, such as the rebellion at Kadesh and the waters of Meribah. How do these reinterpretations contribute to the psalm's unique perspective and its engagement with the historical narrative?
5. Explore the relationship between Psalm 106 and Psalm 107, considering their juxtaposition within the Psalter. How does Psalm 107 serve as a response or continuation of the themes and prayers presented in Psalm 106, and what does this reveal about the editorial strategy of the Psalter?

Glossary of Key Terms

Exodus Psalms: A group of psalms (including 78, 105, 106, and 136) that focus on the story of the Exodus from Egypt and Israel's early history.

Lament: A psalm that expresses grief, sorrow, or distress, often appealing to God for help and deliverance.

Intercession: The act of pleading or praying on behalf of others, often to mediate between them and God.

Passover Reversal: The concept in Psalm 106 where the psalmist identifies with the sins of past generations, a reversal of Passover tradition where participants feel present during the Exodus.

Tikkun ha-Sofrim: A scribal correction made to the biblical text to protect the sanctity of God's name or to avoid any disrespectful language.

Creation Imagery: The use of language and concepts from the Genesis creation story to describe other events, often highlighting God's power and control.

Exile: The period of forced displacement of the Israelites from their land, especially the Babylonian exile in the 6th century BCE.

Doxology: A short hymn or verse praising God, often added to the end of psalms or other texts.

Book of Moses: The name given to Book Four of the Psalter (Psalms 90-106) due to the prevalence of Moses' name and related themes.

5. FAQs on Emanuel, Exodus Psalms, Session 4, Psalm 106 – Standing in the Gap, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about Psalm 106

- How does Psalm 106 differ from other Exodus Psalms like 78, 105, and 136?** Psalm 106 stands out as a lament, where the psalmist acknowledges national distress and cries out for God's help. Unlike other Exodus psalms that often focus on God's miraculous actions and Israel's positive response, Psalm 106 highlights Israel's rebellion, sin, and moral decline throughout their history, from the Exodus to the exile. It also features active, complex characters like Moses and Phineas, who play intercessory roles, and a pronounced emphasis on individual confession ("me" and "I"), which is unique among the Exodus psalms.
- Why is Psalm 106 considered a "confessional prayer," and how does this relate to the concept of a Passover reversal?** Psalm 106 is a confessional prayer because it is centered on the psalmist, as an individual, confessing the sins of the nation, both past and present. The "Passover reversal" refers to the psalmist's confession that he, like the generations who partook in the Passover meal and were thus considered to have participated in the Exodus, also participates in the sins of his forefathers. This is a departure from a simple recitation of history; it is a personal acknowledgment of shared guilt and responsibility.
- What is unique about the portrayal of Moses and Phineas in Psalm 106?** Unlike other Exodus Psalms, Psalm 106 highlights Moses and Phineas as intercessors who actively intervene to avert God's wrath on behalf of the nation. Moses is shown successfully standing in the gap after the sin of the golden calf, and Phineas averts judgment at Baal Peor through his righteous actions. Their intercessory roles are given prominence, with Phineas being exalted to a level comparable to Abraham, because they are examples of individuals who actively intervened on behalf of the nation. This emphasis suggests a key theme of intercession.
- How does Psalm 106 use the Exodus narrative to relate to the psalmist's own experience in exile?** The psalmist frames the historical narrative of the Exodus and subsequent rebellions with an understanding of the exile he is experiencing. By recounting the various sins of the Israelites, he is both confessing the historical transgressions and likening the current exile as a consequence of similar patterns. The plea at the end of the psalm is a direct request for deliverance from the

nations of the exile, thus drawing a parallel between the Exodus and his current situation. There are also subtle insertions made to the narrative that mirror the psalmist's own situation like the scattering of seed.

- **What clues indicate that Psalm 106 was likely written during the exile?** The most significant clue is the verse that says, "Save us O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations." This is seen as a clear indication that the psalm was composed during a period of exile and dispersion, with scholarly consensus generally placing it in the 587 exile period. Furthermore, the psalm's scope, covering from the sea crossing to the exile, and its emphasis on national confession, aligns with the historical context of the exile.
- **How does the structure of Psalm 106 emphasize the theme of Israel's moral decline?** The structure of the Psalm emphasizes Israel's moral decline after the deliverance at the sea. Following a positive beginning with the splitting of the sea, the narrative moves into a recounting of successive acts of rebellion, including complaining, idolatry, and rejecting the promised land. The psalm presents a clear downward trajectory, highlighting Israel's consistent pattern of failing to maintain their covenant relationship with God and showing a moral decline. The use of individual intercessors highlights the lack of national morality.
- **Why does Psalm 106 omit certain details or alter events from the Pentateuchal accounts, like the omission of Korah?** The psalm omits or alters details from the Pentateuchal accounts for several reasons. Sometimes it might be for poetic balance or emphasis, as with omitting Korah from the rebellion narrative. However, omissions may also serve to protect the reputations of prominent figures like Aaron, or to underscore thematic points being made by the psalmist, and perhaps the psalm was intended to be more interpretive than historical. The changes are not to be taken as contradictions but as artistic choices that support the psalmist's message.
- **What is the connection between Psalm 106 and Psalm 107, and what does this reveal about the organization of the Psalter?** Psalm 106 ends with a plea for deliverance from exile, while Psalm 107 begins with God's redemption from exile. This juxtaposition suggests that the editors of the Psalter purposefully placed these psalms next to each other to highlight the interplay between prayer and God's response, with Psalm 107 acting as a "redemption" of Psalm 106's request. This connection shows a thoughtful and deliberate organization of the Psalter and its content. Psalm 106 also appears at the end of book four which is referred to as the book of Moses, further indicating that there was purposeful structure.