

# A Heart for God's Word

## Walking Slowly through Psalms

A First Baptist Church Resource

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## DEDICATION

Dedicated to the faithful ones who walked with me through the Psalms on Wednesday evenings for three years. You came when you were tired. You listened when you were distracted. And you believed the One who gave these words.  
May Our Lord bless you even more as you make these words your own.

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## INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

You hold in your hands not just another Bible Study. Not just another devotional. Not just another book about Psalms. What you hold is a tool for Spiritual listening. Like a wrench or a spatula, this tool has a specific function: **To teach you how to hear, know, ponder, understand, apply, believe, pray, obey, and live the Word of God.**

Moses taught God's people that "the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it," (Deuteronomy 30:14). The Israelites weren't given the Words of God just so they could have head knowledge; it came with life application. And Paul echoed these words when he told us that "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work," (2 Timothy :16-17).

So this tool will help you take God's Word not as a good book or list of instructions or inspiration but for what it really is: the living, active Word of God (Hebrews 4:12), meant to become not only what you know but who you are and what you do. This tool will help you read God's Word with four purposes:

- to **listen** with your eyes, clearly hearing His message and truth.
- to **observe** how words connect through repetition, parable, or explanation
- to **obey** what it teaches, instructs, and commands.
- to **pray** its truths, promises, and heart-felt pleas.

With this tool, you're challenged to begin every day with a Psalm for **40 consecutive days**. Not just week days or calm days or days when you got enough sleep. Not just days that you actually get up when the alarm goes off. **Every day**. Make it your priority to set aside the first moments of your day to hear what God is saying to you. He is the Living God, the Creator of All, the only One who knows you and loves you completely; He is worthy of the sacrifice of your time and attention.

**"What translation of Bible should I use?"** That's up to you. The Scripture is printed every day in the New American Standard, but please grab your own copy of God's Word and keep it next to this book. Having another translation will help you understand the text fully, and you might want to take notes or write ideas in your own Bible.

**"What kind of Bible do I need?"** Study Bibles have their place in understanding God's Word, but for this study you are encouraged to use a Bible with *only margin notes*, either at the sides or in the middle. These cross-references will guide you from scripture to scripture without giving a human take on God's Word.

**"How long will this take?"** That depends on how long you will give. You could rush through it in ten minutes or truly let it soak in for an hour. Ask God how much time He would have you take and do that.

This tool is not meant to be used for this study alone; like any great tool, it's meant to be used many times and in many projects. So use it today to learn how to absorb the words in forty-one of the Psalms, but don't stop there: use it over and over, again and again, to know and believe the words of life given throughout the Old and New Testaments.

And just in case you need one more reason to commit 40 days to learning to use this tool of Spiritual listening, consider these words that Moses said to God's people: "Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words

of this law. **For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life,**” (Deuteronomy 32:46-47).

I look forward to hearing how God’s Word is alive and active in you.

*Pastor Mike*

## DAY 1: PSALM 1

### **The Righteous and the Wicked Contrasted.**

<sup>1</sup> How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

<sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.

<sup>3</sup> He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does,

he prospers.

<sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so,

But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.

<sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

<sup>6</sup> For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,

But the way of the wicked will perish.

## PSALM 2

### **The Reign of the Lord's Anointed.**

<sup>1</sup> Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing?

<sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,

<sup>3</sup> "Let us tear their fetters apart

And cast away their cords from us!"

<sup>4</sup> He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them.

<sup>5</sup> Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying,

<sup>6</sup> "But as for Me, I have installed My King

Upon Zion, My holy mountain."

<sup>7</sup> "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.

<sup>8</sup> 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.

<sup>9</sup> 'You shall break them with a rod of iron, you shall shatter them like earthenware.'"

<sup>10</sup> Now therefore, O kings, show discernment;

Take warning, O judges of the earth.

<sup>11</sup> Worship the Lord with reverence and rejoice with trembling.

<sup>12</sup> Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way,

For His wrath may soon be kindled.

How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalms 1 and 2 slowly and deliberately, aloud if possible, in order to **listen** with your eyes.

Now read Psalm 1 and 2 again to **observe** them. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Psalms 1 and 2 are presented together today because they share the same phrase: "How blessed." Circle it in both psalms. In Psalm 1, underline who is blessed and why.

Describe how believing Psalm 1:2 leads to thriving as in Psalm 1:3.

In Psalm 2, verse one asks a question; verse two and three answer it. Write the question and answer in your own words:

Psalm 2:3-9 reveal a holy conversation.

Who is speaking?

Who is listening?

What is promised?

What word from Psalm 2:7 is also repeated in John 1:14 and John 3:16? What does this word reveal about this heavenly conversation?

Psalm 2:10-12 give warning.

What is the instruction in verse 11?

What is the promise in verse 12?

What does it mean to "take refuge" in God (verse 12)?

**Apply** today's psalm by reading verse 1 again, followed with verse 12. Do you take refuge in God? How? How *should* you?

**Pray** a verse or phrase from today's psalm.



## DAY 2: PSALM 3

### Morning Prayer of Trust in God.

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, how my adversaries have increased!

Many are rising up against me.

<sup>2</sup> Many are saying of my soul,

“There is no deliverance for him in God.” *Selah.*

<sup>3</sup> But You, O Lord, are a shield about me,

My glory, and the One who lifts my head.

<sup>4</sup> I was crying to the Lord with my voice,

And He answered me from His holy mountain. *Selah.*

<sup>5</sup> I lay down and slept;

I awoke, for the Lord sustains me.

<sup>6</sup> I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people

Who have set themselves against me round about.

<sup>7</sup> Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God!

For You have smitten all my enemies on the cheek;

You have shattered the teeth of the wicked.

<sup>8</sup> Salvation belongs to the Lord;

Your blessing *be* upon Your people! *Selah.*

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 3 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it aloud.

Circle the word "Selah" at the end of verses 2, 4, and 8. The word Selah, a musical term, refers to an instrumental interlude, providing time for the psalm-singers to pause and quietly think about the words. Re-read Psalm 3 again, adhering to that instruction.

Now read one more time to **observe** David's song. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Note the descriptions of the Psalm before verse 1:

What time of day is this psalm to be sung?

Read 2 Samuel 15:13-17, 29 to familiarize yourself with the setting of David's psalm. Summarize it:

Circle the word "But" in verse 3. How is David's mood and situation changed when his focus turns from himself and his situation (verses 1-2) to God (verses 3-8)?

What does "the One who lifts my head" mean in verse 3?

Underline each phrase in this psalm that describes God's actions on David's behalf.

**Apply** today's Psalm by focusing on verse 3: Is God your shield? Are you faithfully trusting Him to protect and defend you? Is He your glory? How do you know? Does He lift your head?

**Pray** a verse or phrase from Psalm 3 today. Begin with these words each time you pray for the remainder of the day.

## DAY 3: PSALM 4

### Evening Prayer of Trust in God.

For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have relieved me in my distress;

Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

<sup>2</sup> O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?

How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? *Selah.*

<sup>3</sup> But know that the Lord has set apart the godly man for Himself;

The Lord hears when I call to Him.

<sup>4</sup> Tremble, and do not sin;

Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. *Selah.*

<sup>5</sup> Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,

And trust in the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?"

Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O Lord!

<sup>7</sup> You have put gladness in my heart,

More than when their grain and new wine abound.

<sup>8</sup> In peace I will both lie down and sleep,

For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 4 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it aloud.

Note the descriptions of the Psalm before verse 1:

What time of day is this psalm to be sung?

Which instruments provide the music for this psalm?

Keeping these things in mind, picture yourself hearing and singing these words at dusk with beautiful strings accompanying the lyrics. Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

This psalm begins and ends with David crying to God. In between, however, he is speaking to the congregation around him. Draw a box around David's words to God.

What does David ask of God in verses 1 and 6? (You may write his pleas here or you may simply circle them in the text.)

Upon what confidence does David ask these things, according to verse 3?

The word for tremble in verse 4 can mean *be afraid, stand in awe, disquiet, fall out, fret, move provoke, rage, shake, tremble*. What is David instructing when he says, "Tremble, and do not sin" to the crowd?

How does the second line of verse 4 contrast with the first?

2

How do verses 4 and 8 parallel one another? How do they reflect Psalm 46:10?

**Apply** Psalm 4 today by meditating on these words as you lie down tonight. If possible, read this psalm just before you go to sleep.

As you **pray** today, begin with verse 1.

## DAY 4: PSALM 5

### **Prayer for Protection from the Wicked.**

#### **For the choir director; for flute accompaniment. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my groaning.

<sup>2</sup> Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God,

For to You I pray.

<sup>3</sup> In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice;

In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

<sup>4</sup> For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness;

No evil dwells with You.

<sup>5</sup> The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes;

You hate all who do iniquity.

<sup>6</sup> You destroy those who speak falsehood;

The Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.

<sup>7</sup> But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house,

At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.

<sup>8</sup> O Lord, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes;

Make Your way straight before me.

<sup>9</sup> There is nothing reliable in what they say; Their inward part is destruction itself. their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue.

<sup>10</sup> Hold them guilty, O God; By their own devices let them fall!

In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out,

For they are rebellious against You.

<sup>11</sup> But let all who take refuge in You be glad,

Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them,

That those who love Your name may exult in You.

<sup>12</sup> For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord,

You surround him with favor as with a shield.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 5 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it aloud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. (Did you notice who wrote this? What instrument is mentioned? The purpose for the psalm? All this information is in the bold headings. Mark this important information.)

Why might this song be sung to a flute?

Consider David's words in verses 1-2. What current situation might inspire you to pray them?

According to verse 3, *when* did God hear David's voice? *How* did David speak? What did David *do* after he had spoken his prayer? (You may write or underline your answers in the text.)

**Pray** verse 3 aloud.

Put a box around descriptions of God's powers or God's character.

[Consider using one of the blank pages in the beginning of this study to create a list of descriptions of God in Psalms 1-40. Entitle it, "God is" and add the descriptions found in today's psalm next to a "5" to remind you it is found in Psalm 5.]

Choose one of the characteristics of God you boxed that drew your attention today. Write a short prayer to God, praising Him for this characteristic and applying it to your current situation.

Divide today's psalm into the following: prayers, description of enemies, description of God.

How did David balance his struggles with his enemies with reminding himself of who God is?

**Apply** today's psalm by reminding yourself of God's characteristics each time a troubling event or situation comes to mind.

## DAY 5: PSALM 6

### **Prayer for Mercy in Time of Trouble.**

**For the choir director; with stringed instruments, upon an eight-string lyre. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger,

Nor chasten me in Your wrath.

<sup>2</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I *am* pining away;

Heal me, O LORD, for my bones are dismayed.

<sup>3</sup> And my soul is greatly dismayed; but You, O LORD—how long?

<sup>4</sup> Return, O LORD, rescue my soul;

Save me because of Your lovingkindness.

<sup>5</sup> For there is no mention of You in death;

In Sheol who will give You thanks?

<sup>6</sup> I am weary with my sighing; every night I make my bed swim,

I dissolve my couch with my tears.

<sup>7</sup> My eye has wasted away with grief;

It has become old because of all my adversaries.

<sup>8</sup> Depart from me, all you who do iniquity,

For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD has heard my supplication,

The LORD receives my prayer.

<sup>10</sup> All my enemies will be ashamed and greatly dismayed;

They shall turn back, they will suddenly be ashamed.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 6 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it aloud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

What is troubling you today? What is the title given to this psalm?

Focus on the word "mercy" in the title. What does "mercy" mean? How does verse 1 relate to the biblical concept of mercy?

Underline every phrase David uses to describe himself in this psalm.

What does David ask of God in verses 1-4? You may write them here or put a square around them in the text.

Circle every phrase David uses to describe God in this psalm. (If you started a list yesterday of the characteristics of God, add these to the list.)

This psalm starts out in a sad, despondent tone. By then end, what is David's attitude?

Find the phrase or line that helps David take his focus off himself and turn his focus to the Lord.

Write that phrase or line in your own words, here:

**Pray** that line or phrase for your own trouble right now. Keep that prayer in mind each time that trouble comes to mind.

**Apply** today's psalm by following David's example: honestly pour out your trouble to the Lord, either aloud or in writing. Then thank Him for hearing your prayer (verses 8-9).

## DAY 6: PSALM 7

**The Lord Implored to Defend the Psalmist against the Wicked.**

**A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the Lord concerning Cush, a Benjamite.**

<sup>1</sup> O Lord my God, in You I have taken refuge; save me from all those who pursue me, and deliver me,

<sup>2</sup> Or he will tear my soul like a lion, dragging me away, while there is none to deliver.

<sup>3</sup> O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there is injustice in my hands,

<sup>4</sup> If I have rewarded evil to my friend, or have plundered him who without cause was my adversary,

<sup>5</sup> Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake it; and let him trample my life down to the ground and lay my glory in the dust. *Selah.*

<sup>6</sup> Arise, O Lord, in Your anger; lift up Yourself against the rage of my adversaries, and arouse Yourself for me; You have appointed judgment.

<sup>7</sup> Let the assembly of the peoples encompass You, and over them return on high.

<sup>8</sup> The Lord judges the peoples; vindicate me, O Lord, according to my righteousness and my integrity that is in me.

<sup>9</sup> O let the evil of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous; For the righteous God tries the hearts and minds.

<sup>10</sup> My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart.

<sup>11</sup> God is a righteous judge, and a God who has indignation every day.

<sup>12</sup> If a man does not repent, He will sharpen His sword; He has bent His bow and made it ready.

<sup>13</sup> He has also prepared for Himself deadly weapons; He makes His arrows fiery shafts.

<sup>14</sup> Behold, he travails with wickedness, and he conceives mischief and brings forth falsehood.

<sup>15</sup> He has dug a pit and hollowed it out,  
And has fallen into the hole which he made.

<sup>16</sup> His mischief will return upon his own head, and his violence will descend upon his own pate.

<sup>17</sup> I will give thanks to the Lord according to His righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 7 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it aloud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Note that the Bible commentator describes this type of writing as a *shiggaion*, which is a wildly enthusiastic piece of music or writing. Why might this psalm be sung enthusiastically? Did you read it enthusiastically?

Try it!

What does "Selah" mean in verse 5? (If you don't remember, go back to Day 2 and review its definition.)

Did you observe the instruction to *Selah*?

If you started a list of the characteristics of God, add any from today's psalm to it. (No more reminders! Hopefully you'll begin to consider the characteristics of God as you read your psalm to observe. The characteristics of God are an integral part to the psalms, so whether you mark them in the text, make a list, or simply meditate on them throughout that day, note them with emphasis!)

What does David ask of God in this psalm? Circle or underline those things.

Write the first five words of verse 10:

Write a few different things that that phrase might mean:

**Pray** this phrase from verse 10 now, asking God to reveal areas of your life in which He is *not* your shield because you depend on yourself or others instead of Him. Praise God for being your shield in the past, present, and future.

**Apply** today's psalm by carefully considering verses 12-13 and asking the Spirit to show you thoughts, words, or actions in your life that need repentance.

## DAY 7: PSALM 8

**The Lord's Glory and Man's Dignity.**

**For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, our Lord,

How majestic is Your name in all the earth,

Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

<sup>2</sup> From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength because of Your adversaries,

To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.

<sup>3</sup> When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,

The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;

<sup>4</sup> What is man that You take thought of him,

And the son of man that You care for him?

<sup>5</sup> Yet You have made him a little lower than God,

And You crown him with glory and majesty!

<sup>6</sup> You make him to rule over the works of Your hands;

You have put all things under his feet,

<sup>7</sup> All sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

<sup>8</sup> The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,

Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

<sup>9</sup> O Lord, our Lord,

How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 8 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it aloud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Circle the word gittith, found in the instructions before the text of the Psalm. A gittith is thought to be a stringed instrument. This psalm, along with Psalm 81 and 84, are instructed to be "on the Gittith." Glance at those other psalms in your Bible and see if you notice any unifying characteristics between the three Gittith songs.

This psalm records how God is revealed throughout our visible world. Next to each verse, write *how* or *where* God's glory is observed by David.

Where do you see repetition in this psalm?

Why do you think David chose to use this repetition?

Circle each of the verbs that God does for mankind in this psalm. Focus on them by either writing them below or saying them aloud.

**Apply** today's psalm by praising God for the verbs He does for us. Add your own verbs of praise to the list.

What first draws David's praise in verse 3?

Upon what does David then meditate, according to verses 5-8?

Personalize verse 4 by re-stating it using personal pronouns. (Replace man/him/son of man with I, me, my, mine, or your own name.) You may need to change the verb tense, as well. Write your re-stated verse 4 here:

**Pray** this verse, either in its original form or personalized, as often as it comes to mind today.

## DAY 8: PSALM 9

**A Psalm of Thanksgiving for God's Justice.**

**For the choir director; on Muth-labben. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart;

I will tell of all Your wonders.

<sup>2</sup> I will be glad and exult in You;

I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

<sup>3</sup> When my enemies turn back, they stumble and perish before You.

<sup>4</sup> For You have maintained my just cause;

You have sat on the throne judging righteously.

<sup>5</sup> You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked;

You have blotted out their name forever and ever.

<sup>6</sup> The enemy has come to an end in perpetual ruins,

And You have uprooted the cities; the very memory of them has perished.

<sup>7</sup> But the LORD abides forever; He has established His throne for judgment,

<sup>8</sup> And He will judge the world in righteousness;

He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD also will be a stronghold for the oppressed,

A stronghold in times of trouble;

<sup>10</sup> And those who know Your name will put their trust in You,

For You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.

<sup>11</sup> Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion;

Declare among the peoples His deeds.

<sup>12</sup> For He who requires blood remembers them;

He does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

<sup>13</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD; see my affliction from those who hate me,

You who lift me up from the gates of death,

<sup>14</sup> That I may tell of all Your praises,

That in the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in Your salvation.

<sup>15</sup> The nations have sunk down in the pit which they have made;

In the net which they hid, their own foot has been caught.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD has made Himself known; He has executed judgment.

In the work of his own hands the wicked is snared. *Higgaion Selah.*

<sup>17</sup> The wicked will return to Sheol,

Even all the nations who forget God.

<sup>18</sup> For the needy will not always be forgotten,

Nor the hope of the afflicted perish forever.

<sup>19</sup> Arise, O LORD, do not let man prevail;

Let the nations be judged before You.

<sup>20</sup> Put them in fear, O LORD;

Let the nations know that they are but men. *Selah.*

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 9 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud. *Do not skip today's psalm simply because it is lengthy!*

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. The term found at the end of verse 16, *biggaion*, appears to have a similar meaning to *Selah*, only with a musical meaning. Instead of instructing the singers to pause and calmly consider the words, this term seems to indicate a pause in the music or perhaps that the music alone should continue without the voices.

Did you notice the term Muth-labben in the bold instructions? Research into the term Muth-labben yields several possible translations: it may indicate that this psalm is to be sung upon a particular person's death it may indicate the type of voices to sing it, or it may indicate an instrument that would fit this instrument. Muth-labben occurs only in this psalm.

How does Deuteronomy 29:29 instruct us to handle biblical concepts we cannot grasp?

What does David do with **all His heart**, according to verse 1?

What else do psalmists do with **all their hearts** in the following psalms?

Psalm 119:10

Psalm 119:34

Psalm 119:58

Psalm 119:145

Jeremiah records God saying this same phrase, "with all my heart," in Jeremiah 32:36-42. Read that and summarize it:

Underline every reason David lists for thanking the Lord with all his heart in this psalm. **Apply** verse 11 by reflecting on this list and asking God to bring these and other reasons for thankfulness to your own life.

Re-read verse 19. David's words here sound similar to Asa's words in 2 Chronicles 14:11. Read it in your Bible.

**Pray** today's psalm by turning one of the verses into your cry to God.

## DAY 9: PSALM 10

### A Prayer for the Overthrow of the Wicked.

<sup>1</sup> Why do You stand afar off, O Lord?

Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?

<sup>2</sup> In pride the wicked hotly pursue the afflicted;  
Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.

<sup>3</sup> For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire,  
And the greedy man curses and spurns the Lord.

<sup>4</sup> The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him.  
All his thoughts are, "There is no God."

<sup>5</sup> His ways prosper at all times;  
Your judgments are on high, out of his sight;  
As for all his adversaries, he snorts at them.

<sup>6</sup> He says to himself, "I will not be moved;  
Throughout all generations I will not be in adversity."

<sup>7</sup> His mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression;  
Under his tongue is mischief and wickedness.

<sup>8</sup> He sits in the lurking places of the villages;  
In the hiding places he kills the innocent;  
His eyes stealthily watch for the unfortunate.

<sup>9</sup> He lurks in a hiding place as a lion in his lair;  
He lurks to catch the afflicted;  
He catches the afflicted when he draws him into his net.

<sup>10</sup> crouches, he bows down,  
And the unfortunate fall by his mighty ones.

<sup>11</sup> He says to himself, "God has forgotten;  
He has hidden His face; He will never see it."

<sup>12</sup> Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up Your hand.  
Do not forget the afflicted.

<sup>13</sup> Why has the wicked spurned God?  
He has said to himself, "You will not require it."

<sup>14</sup> You have seen it, for You have beheld mischief and vexation to take it into Your hand. The unfortunate commits himself to You;  
You have been the helper of the orphan.

<sup>15</sup> Break the arm of the wicked and the evildoer,  
Seek out his wickedness until You find none.

<sup>16</sup> The Lord is King forever and ever;  
Nations have perished from His land.

<sup>17</sup> O Lord, You have heard the desire of the humble;  
You will strengthen their heart, You will incline Your ear

<sup>18</sup> To vindicate the orphan and the oppressed,  
So that man who is of the earth will no longer cause terror.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 10 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

How many times does a question beginning with the word "Why" appear? Underline them.

Have you ever asked these questions? When?

There are four instances where the psalmist quotes the thoughts of the wicked man. Circle those four quotes.

Considering these quotes, summarize the thoughts of the wicked man:

We've already observed that several psalms reveal an attitude or mood change as the psalmist is penning or speaking the words of the prayerful song; it happens again in Psalm 10.

Box verse 1 and then box verses 16-18.

Put a star next to the psalmist's direct prayers to God. What does he ask?

Note the word "Arise" in verse 12. Consider the implications of the psalmist asking the Lord to arise. What is he asking?

The word "arise" appeared also in Psalm 3, 7, and 9. Flip back to those psalms and notice what the psalmist is requesting of God in those songs.

**Pray** today's psalm by speaking aloud the words of verse 12 every time you pray today.

Many times in Psalm 10, the psalmist asks God to assist or vindicate someone rejected by society. **Apply** today's psalm by seeking out someone who may feel forgotten by God and man. Reach out to show him or her love and compassion.

## DAY 10: PSALM 11

**The LORD a Refuge and Defense.**

**For the choir director. A *Psalm* of David.**

<sup>1</sup> In the LORD I take refuge;

How can you say to my soul, "Flee *as* a bird to your mountain;

<sup>2</sup> For, behold, the wicked bend the bow,

They make ready their arrow upon the string

To shoot in darkness at the upright in heart.

<sup>3</sup> If the foundations are destroyed,

What can the righteous do?"

<sup>4</sup> The LORD is in His holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven;

His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked,

And the one who loves violence His soul hates.

<sup>6</sup> Upon the wicked He will rain snares;

Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup.

<sup>7</sup> For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness;

The upright will behold His face.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 11 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

How many times do you see the word "LORD?" Circle it each time it appears.

The Hebrew word we type as LORD indicates the name that God gave to Moses from the burning bush. Read Exodus 3:13-15 in your Bible to remind yourself of this story.

How did God describe Himself in Exodus 3:13-15?

Go back and re-read Psalm 11, inserting that definition every time you see LORD. How does this name for God change the emphasis of this song?

What is the prevailing panic of the people around David in verses 1-3?

How does David answer them in verses 4-7?

What current world or national event causes people around you to panic or wonder if God is really in control?

How can you **apply** today's psalm by speaking the truth from it to people who are fearful?

Underline the opening phrase from verse 4. You'll find these same words in Habakkuk 2:20. What instruction follows "The Lord is in His holy temple" in Habakkuk?

What does that instruction mean to you today?

**Pray** Psalm 11:4 by reminding yourself that the Lord is, truly, in His holy temple. Let this assurance give you peace and confidence.

## DAY 11: PSALM 12

**God, a Helper against the Treacherous.**

**For the choir director; upon an eight-stringed lyre. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases to be,

For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.

<sup>2</sup> They speak falsehood to one another;

With flattering lips and with a double heart they speak.

<sup>3</sup> May the LORD cut off all flattering lips,

The tongue that speaks great things;

<sup>4</sup> Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail;

Our lips are our own; who is lord over us?"

<sup>5</sup> "Because of the devastation of the afflicted, because of the groaning of the needy, Now I will arise," says the LORD;

"I will set him in the safety for which he longs."

<sup>6</sup> The words of the LORD are pure words;

As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.

<sup>7</sup> You, O LORD, will keep them;

You will preserve him from this generation forever.

<sup>8</sup> The wicked strut about on every side

When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 12 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Don't miss the bold instructions: it tells who this is for, the instrument to be used, and who wrote it.

Circle the first word of this psalm. The word *help* appears 65 times in the psalms. Look up the following passages and write why it is the psalmist is seeking help from the Lord:

Psalm 18:6

Psalm 30:2

Psalm 46:5

Pause and **pray** this psalm right now, speaking to God about the things with which you need help. Use these verses as examples if needed.

In the margin, bracket together verses 1-4. Bracket verse 5 separately. Then bracket verses 6-8. Give a title or summary for each bracketed section.

In which bracketed section does David's tone and mood change? Why?

After God speaks, David's attention turns away from the wickedness around him to the faithfulness of God's Word. Circle the word in verse 6 the word he uses to describe God's Word.

Psalm 119:140 reflects verse 6 when it says, "Your word is very pure, Therefore Your servant loves it." But the idea of a pure word is also given as an instruction to us in 1 Peter 2:1-3. Read those verses and summarize them:

**Apply** today's psalm by committing yourself to live according to the pure word of God, obediently and cheerfully.

## DAY 12: PSALM 13

**Prayer for Help in Trouble.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

<sup>2</sup> How long shall I take counsel in my soul,

Having sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

<sup>3</sup> Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;

Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

<sup>4</sup> And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"

And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

<sup>5</sup> But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness;

My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.

<sup>6</sup> I will sing to the LORD,

Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 13 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. The bold description at the top of the psalm does not tell us David's exact situation, but we know he struggled through his own sin, the death of numerous children, enemies throughout his life, threats against his life, and the ongoing burden of leading God's people spiritually and militarily. He may have returned to this psalm over and over.

What are the two questions David asks in verse 1?

What instance in your own life comes to mind when you think of praying a prayer for help in trouble?

**Pray** this psalm by reading verse 1 aloud and focusing on your current need for help. Meditate on this verse by asking God to bring to mind any other aspects of your life in which you feel God has forgotten you.

Read Revelation 6:9-11. How does this prophetic word give us hope when the words of Psalm 13:1 are on our lips?

Boldly circle the first word in verse 5. How does this word change everything?

Underline the three things David has chosen to do in verses 5 and 6.

How does Philippians 4:4-7 instruct us to do as David has done in Psalm 13?

**Apply** today's psalm by openly pouring out your troubles to God *as you* choose to trust Him, rejoice, and sing all the while.

## DAY 13: PSALM 14

**Folly and Wickedness of Men.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds;

There is no one who does good.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men

To see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.

<sup>3</sup>They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt;

There is no one who does good, not even one.

<sup>4</sup>Do all the workers of wickedness not know,

Who eat up my people as they eat bread,

And do not call upon the Lord?

<sup>5</sup>There they are in great dread,

For God is with the righteous generation.

<sup>6</sup>You would put to shame the counsel of the afflicted,

But the LORD is his refuge.

<sup>7</sup>Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!

When the LORD restores His captive people,

Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 14 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Circle the word *fool* and underline every phrase that describes a fool.

What is the definition of a fool, according to Proverbs 1:7? In that same verse, what brings wisdom?

According to Psalm 14:2, how does one gain understanding?

David said similar words to his son Solomon in 1 Chronicles 28:9. Read this verse and write the correlation between *understanding* and *seeking*.

Draw a star beside every phrase that describes God's blessing upon those who actually seek and obey Him.

You might notice that this is not a psalm *to* God (vertical) but a psalm *about* God (horizontal). Review the bold description at the top: for whom is this psalm composed?

Read through this psalm again, as though a worship leader were singing this to you in a worship service. How would you respond?

**Pray** today's psalm by focusing on the second phrase of verse 5: "for God is with the righteous generation." Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal to you how He would have you live righteously and reveal His presence in your own generation and others.

**Apply** today's psalm by keeping your eyes open to share the truth that *God is with the righteous generation* to someone who feels hopeless today.

## DAY 14: PSALM 15

**Description of a Citizen of Zion.**

**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>O LORD, who may abide in Your tent?

Who may dwell on Your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup>He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness,  
And speaks truth in his heart.

<sup>3</sup>He does not slander with his tongue,  
Nor does evil to his neighbor,  
Nor takes up a reproach against his friend;

<sup>4</sup>In whose eyes a reprobate is despised,  
But who honors those who fear the LORD;  
He swears to his own hurt and does not change;

<sup>5</sup>He does not put out his money at interest,  
Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.  
He who does these things will never be shaken.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 15 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. What is the bolded title of this psalm?

What is David asking in verse 1? Re-write his question in your own words.

Underline every characteristic of one who may abide with the Lord.

David's description contains both things a citizen of Zion *should* do but also things one *should not* do. Beside each thing we *should* do, write a check. Beside each thing we *should not* do, draw an X.

Some of the descriptions listed in Psalm 15 are internal while some are external. Circle the *internal* characteristics of a citizen of Zion.

Re-read the last line of this psalm. Turn in your own Bible to Psalm 112:6-9 and write the descriptions of a person who "will never be shaken."

The word "shaken" in verse 5 is translated from a Hebrew word that is defined, "to totter, shake, slip, be moved, be overthrown, dislodge, drop."

Some of the phrases from today's psalm seem odd to our 21<sup>st</sup> century American ears. Take some time to look up this psalm in a variety of translations to glean additional insight.

**Pray** verse 5, asking the Spirit to reveal to you where you are shaken and how you can live righteously in the face of trouble.

**Apply** today's psalm by choosing one description from Psalm 15 with which you struggle. Meditate on this verse, asking God to cleanse you and empower you to obey.

## DAY 15: PSALM 16

**The LORD the Psalmist's Portion in Life and Deliverer in Death.  
A Mikhtam of David.**

<sup>1</sup>Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You.

<sup>2</sup>I said to the LORD, "You are my Lord;

I have no good besides You."

<sup>3</sup>As for the saints who are in the earth,

They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight.

<sup>4</sup>The sorrows of those who have bartered for another *god* will be multiplied;

I shall not pour out their drink offerings of blood,

Nor will I take their names upon my lips.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup;

You support my lot.

<sup>6</sup>The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;

Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.

<sup>7</sup>I will bless the LORD who has counseled me;

Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.

<sup>8</sup>I have set the LORD continually before me;

Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices;

My flesh also will dwell securely.

<sup>10</sup>For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol;

Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

<sup>11</sup>You will make known to me the path of life;

In Your presence is fullness of joy;

In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 16 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

You noted in the bold heading that this psalm is a *mikbtam*, taken from the original Hebrew word that means “to be stamped.” We can think of this as something so precious that it is worth the effort to engrave it. Put in today's terms, it is as special as an engraved golden treasure. Understanding that word, read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you as being *precious*.

In some previous psalms, David's focus is on the wickedness of his enemies or those who do not revere God. What is his focus in this psalm?

Re-read verse 2. Consider how this verse is reflected in the following New Testament passages:

Philemon 1:6

Hebrews 13:21

James 1:17

**Pray** verse 2 by making it into a personal song of praise right now. Add any other verses that seemed to stand out to you personally.

Did you note the phrase that appears in today's psalm that also appeared in Psalm 15 yesterday? (It's in verse 8 if you missed it.) *Why* can David confidently say he will never be shaken in verse 8?

Re-read verse 7. Notice how other Bibles translate that second line:

“Yea, my heart instructeth me in the night seasons” (ASV)

“even at night I am instructed in the depths of my mind” (CEB)

“Even in the darkest night, your teachings fill my mind” (CEV)

“during the night I reflect and learn” (NET)

Consider writing verse 7 on an index card and keeping it close to your bed. The next time you struggle to sleep, **apply** this verse by repeating it quietly, praying God will reveal its truth.

## DAY 16: PSALM 17

### Prayer for Protection against Oppressors.

#### A Prayer of David.

<sup>1</sup> Hear a just cause, O LORD, give heed to my cry;  
Give ear to my prayer, which is not from deceitful lips.

<sup>2</sup> Let my judgment come forth from Your presence;  
Let Your eyes look with equity.

<sup>3</sup> You have tried my heart;  
You have visited me by night;  
You have tested me and You find nothing;  
I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress.

<sup>4</sup> As for the deeds of men, by the word of Your lips  
I have kept from the paths of the violent.

<sup>5</sup> My steps have held fast to Your paths.  
My feet have not slipped.

<sup>6</sup> I have called upon You, for You will answer me, O God;  
Incline Your ear to me, hear my speech.

<sup>7</sup> Wondrously show Your lovingkindness,  
O Savior of those who take refuge at Your right hand  
From those who rise up against them.

<sup>8</sup> Keep me as the apple of the eye;  
Hide me in the shadow of Your wings

<sup>9</sup> From the wicked who despoil me,  
My deadly enemies who surround me.

<sup>10</sup> They have closed their unfeeling heart,  
With their mouth they speak proudly.

<sup>11</sup> They have now surrounded us in our steps;  
They set their eyes to cast us down to the ground.

<sup>12</sup> He is like a lion that is eager to tear,  
And as a young lion lurking in hiding places.

<sup>13</sup> Arise, O LORD, confront him, bring him low;  
Deliver my soul from the wicked with Your sword,

<sup>14</sup> From men with Your hand, O LORD,  
From men of the world, whose portion is in this life,  
And whose belly You fill with Your treasure;  
They are satisfied with children,  
And leave their abundance to their babes.

<sup>15</sup> As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness;  
I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 17 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Underline every phrase in which David describes His own faithfulness to God. (Specifically look in verses 1-5.)

David did not come to live righteously overnight or easily; in fact, many of the psalms record prayers for help in living according to God's Word. Look up each of these verses and write the psalmist's request:

Psalm 19:14

Psalm 51:15

Psalm 119:35

Psalm 143:8

Re-read verse 8. What is the "apple of the eye?" (If you don't know, guess!)

Here are some additional passages that have the same phrase. What do you learn about the "apple of the eye?"

Proverbs 7:2

Zechariah 2:8

Re-read verse 8 again. What is the "shadow of Your wings?" (If you don't know, guess!)

What happens in the shadow of the Lord's wings, according to these verses:

Psalm 57:1

Psalm 63:7

**Pray** today's psalm by speaking Psalm 17:8 aloud. Meditate on the verse by asking God to reveal to you that you are the apple of His eye and that He is keeping you in the shadow of His wings.

**Apply** today's verse by re-committing your life to following God's Word faithfully in all you say, think, and do.

## DAY 17: PSALM 18

(Today's psalm is too long to fit into one page; please consider these verses for our study today. However, the entire psalm is of great value! Find time to read it in its entirety after you complete the study.)

### **The LORD Praised for Giving Deliverance.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.**

**And he said,**

<sup>1</sup> "I love You, O LORD, my strength."

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,

My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge;

My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

<sup>3</sup> I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,

And I am saved from my enemies.

<sup>4</sup> The cords of death encompassed me,

And the torrents of ungodliness terrified me.

<sup>5</sup> The cords of Sheol surrounded me;

The snares of death confronted me.

<sup>6</sup> In my distress I called upon the LORD,

And cried to my God for help;

He heard my voice out of His temple,

And my cry for help before Him came into His ears.

<sup>16</sup> He sent from on high, He took me;

He drew me out of many waters.

<sup>17</sup> He delivered me from my strong enemy,

And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.

<sup>18</sup> They confronted me in the day of my calamity,

But the LORD was my stay.

<sup>19</sup> He brought me forth also into a broad place;

He rescued me, because He delighted in me.

<sup>49</sup> Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O LORD,

And I will sing praises to Your name.

<sup>50</sup> He gives great deliverance to His king,

And shows lovingkindness to His anointed,

To David and his descendants forever.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 18 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. At which point in his life did David speak the words of this psalm?

To review the relationship between David and Saul, look up each of the following passages and briefly describe what happened:

1 Samuel 18:11

1 Samuel 19:1

1 Samuel 19:10-11

And that's not all! Saul pursued David for years after these events, trying to kill him. Read 1 Samuel 24 and 26 for more background information.

David was a mighty warrior whose resume already included the death of Goliath. But what does He say in verse 1? (Write it here.)

**Pray** today's psalm by starting each prayer with the words from verse 1.

Underline every phrase in verse 2 that starts with "my."

David describes God's deliverance through many action verbs in this psalm. Circle each time you see "He (action verb)" in Psalm 18.

Start a list of God's action verbs from your own life. (Examples may include "He kept me from temptation," or "He provided a job.") Write these in the margin.

Now re-read verse 49. Look back over your list of action verbs and thank God, singing praise for all He has done in your life.

**Apply** today's psalm by prayerfully asking for an opportunity to share God's actions in your life with someone who needs comfort and reassurance.

## DAY 18: PSALM 19

### The Works and the Word of God.

#### For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup>The heavens are telling of the glory of God;  
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.  
<sup>2</sup>Day to day pours forth speech,  
And night to night reveals knowledge.  
<sup>3</sup>There is no speech, nor are there words;  
Their voice is not heard.  
<sup>4</sup>Their line has gone out through all the earth,  
And their utterances to the end of the world.  
In them He has placed a tent for the sun,  
<sup>5</sup>Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber;  
It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.  
<sup>6</sup>Its rising is from one end of the heavens,  
And its circuit to the other end of them;  
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.  
<sup>7</sup>The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;  
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.  
<sup>8</sup>The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;  
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.  
<sup>9</sup>The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;  
The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.  
<sup>10</sup>They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;  
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup>Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;  
In keeping them there is great reward.  
<sup>12</sup>Who can discern *his* errors? Acquit me of hidden *faults*.  
<sup>13</sup>Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous *sins*;  
Let them not rule over me;  
Then I will be blameless,  
And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.  
<sup>14</sup>Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
Be acceptable in Your sight,  
O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 19 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

What is David's focus in verses 1-6?

What is David's focus in verses 7-11?

What is David's focus in verses 12-14?

How might nature cause you to reflect on God's Word?

How might God's Word cause you to reflect on your own sinfulness?

You might recall a similar progression of focus from nature to the power of Jesus' Word to the sinfulness of man in Luke 5:1-11. Read that now and summarize it.

Recall a time in your own life when you were overwhelmed by God's handiwork in nature.

**Pray** today's psalm by reading these words aloud while outside. Turn those words into a prayer as you lift them up to the Lord.

Underline every word that describes God's Word.

**Apply** today's psalm by asking yourself, "Do I revere God's Word as David does in this psalm?" Allow the Holy Spirit to show you your true level of honor toward God's Word in your life.

Re-read verse 14. Write David's prayer in your own words.

What are the two images David uses to describe God in verse 14? How do these images reflect David's request to have words and meditation that are acceptable to God?

## DAY 19: PSALM 20

**Prayer for Victory over Enemies.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble!

May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high!

<sup>2</sup> May He send you help from the sanctuary and support you from Zion!

<sup>3</sup> May He remember all your meal offerings

And find your burnt offering acceptable! *Selah.*

<sup>4</sup> May He grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your counsel!

<sup>5</sup> We will sing for joy over your victory,

And in the name of our God we will set up our banners.

May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.

<sup>6</sup> Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed;

He will answer him from His holy heaven

With the saving strength of His right hand.

<sup>7</sup> Some boast in chariots and some in horses,

But we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God.

<sup>8</sup> They have bowed down and fallen,

But we have risen and stood upright.

<sup>9</sup> Save, O LORD; May the King answer us in the day we call.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 20 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. What word appears **seven** times in this psalm? Circle it every time it appears.

Underline the phrase following the word "may" to find the seven prayers of David in this psalm.

Write the things David is praying for here:

**Pray** today's psalm by reflecting on David's prayers and praying them for your own life or for someone God has placed upon your heart.

Note that, in the midst of his seven prayers, David rejoices in verse 5. For what does he rejoice?

**Apply** today's psalm by rejoicing with someone who is experiencing victory through God. Call, write, or visit them with the purpose of rejoicing with them and glorifying God.

Re-read verse 7. Put a square around the word *but*. (This word always shows a contrast in scripture. You may want to consider marking it every time you see it.)

What do "some" boast in, according to verse 7?

What *should* we boast in?

Paul also speaks of boasting in Galatians 6:14. According to this verse, in what should we boast?

Upon what does Paul boast in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10?

What is the Spirit saying to you regarding boasting?

## DAY 20: PSALM 21

**Praise for Deliverance.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, in Your strength the king will be glad,

And in Your salvation how greatly he will rejoice!

<sup>2</sup> You have given him his heart's desire,

And You have not withheld the request of his lips. *Selah.*

<sup>3</sup> For You meet him with the blessings of good things;

You set a crown of fine gold on his head.

<sup>4</sup> He asked life of You, You gave it to him, length of days forever and ever.

<sup>5</sup> His glory is great through Your salvation,

Splendor and majesty You place upon him.

<sup>6</sup> For You make him most blessed forever;

You make him joyful with gladness in Your presence.

<sup>7</sup> For the king trusts in the LORD,

And through the lovingkindness of the Most High he will not be shaken.

<sup>8</sup> Your hand will find out all your enemies;

Your right hand will find out those who hate you.

<sup>9</sup> You will make them as a fiery oven in the time of your anger;

The LORD will swallow them up in His wrath, and fire will devour them.

<sup>10</sup> Their offspring You will destroy from the earth,

And their descendants from among the sons of men.

<sup>11</sup> Though they intended evil against You

And devised a plot, they will not succeed.

<sup>12</sup> For You will make them turn their back;

You will aim with Your bowstrings at their faces.

<sup>13</sup> Be exalted, O LORD, in Your strength;

We will sing and praise Your power.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 21 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. What is the bold description of this Psalm?

We've looked at several psalms *asking* God to deliver or protect; today's *praises* Him for doing just that. Reflect on your own life: in what ways have you asked God to deliver you? In what ways has He?

According to verse 1, what brings gladness and joy to David?

According to verse 2, what had God done for Him?

What is the worship instruction at the end of verse 2? (If you don't remember what *Selah* means, look back at Psalm 3.)

Read Psalm 37:4. According to this verse, how does one receive the desires of his heart?

How does Psalm 37:4 shed light on Psalm 21:2?

Re-read verse 6. Consider these other translations:

"You have given him blessings that will last forever. You have given him the joy of being near you" (ERV)

"For You make him most blessed [and a blessing] forever; You make him joyful with the joy of Your presence" (AMP)

Rewrite verse 6 in your own words, personalized. (Start with the words "You make *me*...")

**Pray** verse 6 as you wrote them.

**Apply** verse 7 by laying your prayer requests before the Lord and saying, "I trust you, God." Where you do not trust, ask Him to strengthen your faith (Mark 9:23-24).

## DAY 21: PSALM 22

(Like Psalm 18, today's psalm is too long to fit into one page; please consider these verses for our study today but make time to read it in its entirety after you complete the study.)

### **A Cry of Anguish and a Song of Praise. For the choir director; upon Aijeleth Hashshahar. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?  
Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.  
<sup>2</sup> O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer;  
And by night, but I have no rest.  
<sup>3</sup> Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.  
<sup>4</sup> In You our fathers trusted; they trusted and You delivered them.  
<sup>5</sup> To You they cried out and were delivered;  
In You they trusted and were not disappointed.  
<sup>6</sup> But I am a worm and not a man,  
A reproach of men and despised by the people.  
<sup>7</sup> All who see me sneer at me;  
They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying,  
<sup>8</sup> "Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him;  
Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."

<sup>17</sup> I can count all my bones.  
They look, they stare at me;  
<sup>18</sup> They divide my garments among them,  
And for my clothing they cast lots.  
<sup>19</sup> But You, O LORD, be not far off;  
O You my help, hasten to my assistance.  
I will tell of Your name to my brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.

<sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise Him;  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel.  
<sup>24</sup> For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from him;  
But when he cried to Him for help, He heard.

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord,  
And all the families of the nations will worship before You.  
<sup>28</sup> For the kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 22 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm, with strong prophecy and allusion to Christ. Underline every phrase that makes you think of Christ.

Read Matthew 27:33-54 in your Bible and notice how many phrases from this crucifixion account appear in Psalm 22.

Spend a few moments reflecting on all that Christ endured physically and emotionally on the cross. **Pray** this psalm by thanking Him for His sacrifice and His love.

Go back and re-read the bold description of Psalm 22. What are the two parts of this psalm?

Circle the things for which David praises God in Psalm 22.

The Hebrew phrase *Aijeleth Hashshabar* in the description is commonly translated "the hind of the morning." A *hind* is a wild deer found in and around ancient Israel, used both for food and sacrifice. (A *hart* is the male version of a *hind*.)

How does the phrase *Aijeleth Hashshabar* describe Jesus' death by crucifixion?

How might this title make you think of a cry of anguish and a psalm of praise?

What word in verse 19 indicates a turning point in the focus and attitude of the psalm? (You put a square around it in Psalm 20.)

David did not diminish his suffering or hide it from others. He poured out his pain to the Lord as part of worship. *But* he never forgot God's nearness and help when he struggled.

**Apply** today's psalm by following David's example: lay out your struggles as you profess that He is near and He is powerful.

**DAY 22: PSALM 23**  
**The LORD, the Psalmist's Shepherd.**  
**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside quiet waters.

<sup>3</sup>He restores my soul;

He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I fear no evil, for You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,

And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 23 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud. *Take extra time today, asking the Holy Spirit to bring Psalm 23 alive in a new, fresh way!*

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

What pronoun does David use to refer to God in verses 1-3?

What different pronoun does David refer to God in verses 4-5?

Picture David singing this song: he begins by looking at the congregation as he sings *about* God. And then, in the middle, his head flings upward, eyes toward heaven, as he speaks *to* God personally. At the end, he returns his gaze to the people, confident in eternity.

**Pray** today's psalm by turning each line into a prayer. There is plenty of room to write your response following each line. (For example, for verse 1 you may write, "Oh, Lord, You truly have provided me with everything I need. Please forgive my longing for more.")

What do you know about sheep? (What kind of temperament do they have? What are some of their tendencies?) Describe sheep here:

In what ways are you like a sheep?

In what ways is God your shepherd?

In what ways do you *resist* God's rightful place as shepherd of your life?

**Apply** today's verse by thinking of yourself as a sheep throughout the day. Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal to you where you need to submit and trust your Shepherd.

**DAY 23: PSALM 24**  
**The King of Glory Entering Zion.**  
**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains,  
The world, and those who dwell in it.

<sup>2</sup>For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

<sup>3</sup>Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?  
And who may stand in His holy place?

<sup>4</sup>He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully.

<sup>5</sup>He shall receive a blessing from the LORD  
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

<sup>6</sup>This is the generation of those who seek Him,  
Who seek Your face—even Jacob. *Selah.*

<sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in!

<sup>8</sup>Who is the King of glory?  
The LORD strong and mighty,  
The LORD mighty in battle.

<sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates,  
And lift *them* up, O ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in!

<sup>10</sup>Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD of hosts,  
He is the King of glory. *Selah.*

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 24 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. (Today's psalm has MANY repeated phrases; Don't miss them! Mark each repeated phrase in such a way that you see them clearly.)

(If you know the song by Third Day entitled, "King of Glory" sing it or meditate on it.)

What is the significance of the doors and gates in ancient times?

What might a kingdom with strong doors and gates represent?

What is David commanding the doors and gates in Psalm 24?

Though not as easily observed, this is also a Messianic Psalm like Psalm 22. David is speaking to the Lord—God—but he is referring to a King. That title is saved for One in Revelation.

Who is this King, according to Revelation 19:16?

What else do you learn about Him in Revelation 21:24?

Re-read verse 1. Then read John 1:1-5. What role did Jesus have in creation?

What title for God does David use in verse 10?

However, what does Jesus say in Matthew 28:18? (To whom has God given authority and power?)

**Apply** today's psalm by saying verse 6 aloud, and re-committing yourself to seeking God.

Turn verses 3-5 into your **prayer** today. Ask the Spirit to show you where you need to have cleaner hands and a purer heart.

## DAY 24: PSALM 25

**Prayer for Protection, Guidance and Pardon.**

**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

<sup>2</sup>O my God, in You I trust, do not let me be ashamed;  
Do not let my enemies exult over me.

<sup>3</sup>Indeed, none of those who wait for You will be ashamed;  
Those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed.

<sup>4</sup>Make me know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths.

<sup>5</sup>Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation;  
For You I wait all the day.

<sup>6</sup>Remember, O LORD, Your compassion and Your lovingkindnesses,  
For they have been from of old.

<sup>7</sup>Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;  
According to Your lovingkindness remember me,  
For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.

<sup>8</sup>Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He instructs sinners in the way.

<sup>9</sup>He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way.

<sup>10</sup>All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness and truth  
To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.

<sup>11</sup>For Your name's sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity, for it is great.

<sup>12</sup>Who is the man who fears the LORD?

He will instruct him in the way he should choose.

<sup>13</sup>His soul will abide in prosperity,  
And his descendants will inherit the land.

<sup>14</sup>The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him,  
And He will make them know His covenant.

<sup>15</sup>My eyes are continually toward the LORD,  
For He will pluck my feet out of the net.

<sup>16</sup>Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

<sup>17</sup>The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses.

<sup>18</sup>Look upon my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins.

<sup>19</sup>Look upon my enemies, for they are many,  
And they hate me with violent hatred.

<sup>20</sup>Guard my soul and deliver me;  
Do not let me be ashamed, for I take refuge in You.

<sup>21</sup>Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for You.

<sup>22</sup>Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 25 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. (There is one word repeated in verse 6, 7, and 10. Did you catch it?)

The word "lovingkindness" can be translated *faithful love, steadfast love, merciful deeds, or everlasting love and kindness*. Say verses 6, 7, and 10 aloud using one of these terms.

What do you learn about God's lovingkindness in these verses?

Re-read verses 4-5. What are the three things David asks of God in these verses? (Hint: Each of his requests is a verb followed by "me.")

**Pray** verses 4-5 right now on your own behalf by asking God to do the three things David asked in these verses.

Underline each of the "I" statements of faith made by David in this psalm. (There is one in each of the following verses: 1, 2, 5, 20, and 21.)

Meditate on those "I" statements, asking the Holy Spirit to lead you to focus on one. **Apply** today's psalm by choosing to believe this statement and act on it according to the Holy Spirit.

This psalm also contains several promises. Circle them. (You'll find promises in verses 3, 10, 12-13, and 14).

We are blessed to know and believe God's promises to us.  
How should we respond, according to Psalm 119:57?

Spend time in psalms from previous days, finding promises and marking them. You may want to consider starting a list of Promises in the Psalms in one of the blank pages near the front of this study.

## DAY 25: PSALM 26

### Protestation of Integrity and Prayer for Protection.

#### A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity,  
And I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

<sup>2</sup> Examine me, O LORD, and try me; test my mind and my heart.

<sup>3</sup> For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes,  
And I have walked in Your truth.

<sup>4</sup> I do not sit with deceitful men, nor will I go with pretenders.

<sup>5</sup> I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.

<sup>6</sup> I shall wash my hands in innocence,  
And I will go about Your altar, O LORD,

<sup>7</sup> That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving  
And declare all Your wonders.

<sup>8</sup> O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house  
And the place where Your glory dwells.

<sup>9</sup> Do not take my soul away along with sinners,  
Nor my life with men of bloodshed,

<sup>10</sup> In whose hands is a wicked scheme,  
And whose right hand is full of bribes.

<sup>11</sup> But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity;  
Redeem me, and be gracious to me.

<sup>12</sup> My foot stands on a level place;  
In the congregations I shall bless the LORD.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 26 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. Note the bold title.

Summarize this psalm in one sentence:

Underline the two "I have" phrases in verse 1.

David describes his faith by his *walk* and his *trust* in verse 1. What does he ask in verse 2?

How are verses 1-2 reflected in Proverbs 3:5-6?

How are verses 1-2 reflected in Proverbs 10:9?

Turn verse 2 into your **prayer** for today. After praying it, spend a few moments in silence, providing the Holy Spirit the opportunity to speak to you in regards to your mind and your heart.

Re-read verses 6-8. What might be the setting for these verses?

With what characteristics is David worshiping in verses 6-8?

How do these verses reflect Psalm 100?

What is the similarity between verse 1 and verse 11?

The word "integrity" may be translated *blameless life*, *pure life*, and *innocent life*.

According to Psalm 19:12-13, how can we know that we are living a blameless life?

**Apply** today's psalm by analyzing your life, recognizing that your life is your worship. Are you walking in integrity? Can you honestly speak the words of this psalm?

## DAY 26: PSALM 27

**A Psalm of Fearless Trust in God.**

**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread?

<sup>2</sup>When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh,

My adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell.

<sup>3</sup>Though a host encamp against me, my heart will not fear;

Though war arise against me, in spite of this I shall be confident.

<sup>4</sup>One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek:

That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,

To behold the beauty of the LORD and to meditate in His temple.

<sup>5</sup>For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle;

In the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock.

<sup>6</sup>And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me,

And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;

I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice,

And be gracious to me and answer me.

<sup>8</sup>When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You,

"Your face, O LORD, I shall seek."

<sup>9</sup>Do not hide Your face from me, do not turn Your servant away in anger;

You have been my help; do not abandon me nor forsake me,

O God of my salvation!

<sup>10</sup>For my father and my mother have forsaken me,

But the LORD will take me up.

<sup>11</sup>Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a level path

Because of my foes.

<sup>12</sup>Do not deliver me over to the desire of my adversaries,

For false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence.

<sup>13</sup>I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

<sup>14</sup>Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage;

Yes, wait for the LORD.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 27 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. Do not miss the bold title!

Several words appear more than once in this psalm. Whenever you notice a word appearing twice in a psalm, take notice. If it appears more than twice, it's as though God Himself is highlighting the words in the text.

The repeated words include heart, face, wait, seek, evildoers (and synonyms), house of the Lord (and synonyms). Did you mark them all? If not, find them and mark them in different ways.

Which word stands out to you today? Write all you learn about that word in Psalm 27 here:

In Psalm 37:4 we read, "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart." How does that verse relate to Psalm 27:8?

Which verse is echoed in Isaiah 26:7?

Another observant habit to develop in studying the Psalms is to read the opening verse and immediately read the last verse. How does the last verse seem to answer the first?

**Pray** today's psalm using verse 7, noticing the requests David makes of God. Use the first word and complete your prayer with specifics from your own life:

Hear \_\_\_\_\_

Be gracious \_\_\_\_\_

Answer me \_\_\_\_\_

**Apply** today's psalm by meditating on verse 14. What is the thing that comes to mind when you hear the Holy Spirit telling you to *wait*?

## DAY 27: PSALM 28

**A Prayer for Help, and Praise for Its Answer.**

***A Psalm of David.***

<sup>1</sup>To You, O LORD, I call; my rock, do not be deaf to me,

For if You are silent to me,

I will become like those who go down to the pit.

<sup>2</sup>Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry to You for help,

When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary.

<sup>3</sup>Do not drag me away with the wicked and with those who work iniquity,

Who speak peace with their neighbors, while evil is in their hearts.

<sup>4</sup>Requite them according to their work and according to the evil of their practices;

Requite them according to the deeds of their hands;

Repay them their recompense.

<sup>5</sup>Because they do not regard the works of the LORD

Nor the deeds of His hands,

He will tear them down and not build them up.

<sup>6</sup>Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplication.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD is my strength and my shield;

My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped;

Therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall thank Him.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD is their strength, and He is a saving defense to His anointed.

<sup>9</sup>Save Your people and bless Your inheritance;

Be their shepherd also, and carry them forever.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 28 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

What is David's request in verse 2?

Where does David record the answer to this prayer?

You likely saw the word "requite" in verse 4. This word can also be translated *Give to, Repay, Pay them back, and Punish*. What, then, is David asking?

What phrases are similar in verse 7 and 8? Underline them.

What word is different in those underlined phrases?

How does your faith affect the faith of other people?

You've probably noticed the following elements that are commonly found in David's psalms:

- A) Prayer requests
- B) Describing difficult people or circumstances
- C) Declaring God's characteristics
- D) Praise/Thanksgiving
- E) Statement of faith

As you dwell on Psalm 28, label each verse as one of these elements.

Use today's Psalm as an example for your own **prayer** today. Use each of the elements from David's prayers as you bring your own petitions and praises to the Lord.

**Apply** today's psalm by meditating on verse 9. As you slowly take in each verse, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind one person for whom you can pray, serve, or love.

## DAY 28: PSALM 29

**The Voice of the LORD in the Storm.**

**A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O sons of the mighty,  
Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name;  
Worship the LORD in holy array.

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;  
The God of glory thunders,  
The LORD is over many waters.

<sup>4</sup> The voice of the LORD is powerful,  
The voice of the LORD is majestic.

<sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
Yes, the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
And Sirion like a young wild ox.

<sup>7</sup> The voice of the LORD hews out flames of fire.

<sup>8</sup> The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
The LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

<sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD makes the deer to calve  
And strips the forests bare;  
And in His temple everything says, "Glory!"

<sup>10</sup> The LORD sat as King at the flood;  
Yes, the LORD sits as King forever.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD will give strength to His people;  
The LORD will bless His people with peace.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 29 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud. (If ever there is a psalm to shout, this may be it!)

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. Be sure to underline *the voice of the Lord* every time it appears!

The phrase *Ascribe to the Lord* in verses 1-2 can also be translated *Give all credit* or *Praise*. You might even say, "Give the Lord His due." **Apply** today's psalm by doing just that: Give God His due right now by describing Him here:

The phrase *the voice of the Lord* is obviously emphasized in this psalm of praise. Why do you think David specifically said, "The *voice* of the Lord," instead of simply saying, "The Lord?"

Consider Moses' words to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 30:15-20. What do you learn about the *voice of the Lord* in that passage?

What warning do we get about the *voice of God* in Psalm 95:7-8?

What did the Israelites receive from the *voice of the Lord* in Deuteronomy 5:22-25? (You may want to look back at verses 1-21 to get the context).

What statement of faith can you get from Joshua 24:24 concerning the *voice of the Lord*?

Using the terms in Psalm 29, what are some qualities of the *voice of the Lord*?

**Pray** today's psalm by considering all you observed about the *voice of the Lord* and writing it as a prayer of praise.

What is the voice of the Lord saying to you today?

## DAY 29: PSALM 30

**Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death.**

**A Psalm; a Song at the Dedication of the House. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> I will extol You, O LORD, for You have lifted me up,

And have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

<sup>2</sup> O LORD my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, You have brought up my soul from Sheol;

You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit.

<sup>4</sup> Sing praise to the LORD, you His godly ones,

And give thanks to His holy name.

<sup>5</sup> For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime;

Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning.

<sup>6</sup> Now as for me, I said in my prosperity, "I will never be moved."

<sup>7</sup> O LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain to stand strong;

You hid Your face, I was dismayed.

<sup>8</sup> To You, O LORD, I called, and to the Lord I made supplication:

<sup>9</sup> "What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the pit?

Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your faithfulness?

<sup>10</sup> "Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me; O LORD, be my helper."

<sup>11</sup> You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;

You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,

<sup>12</sup> That my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent.

O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 30 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Did you notice in the bold title the occasion for this psalm of David?

We might assume that David wrote this psalm in honor of the completion of the House of God, but what does 2 Samuel 7:1-2 teach us?

According to Deuteronomy 20:5, what did the Israelites do when they built a new house?

According to Isaiah 32:17-18, what should a Christian home be?

What kind of circumstances has David been through, according to verses 1-5?

According to verses 11-12, how did God respond?

Meditate on verse 11: What do mourning and sackcloth represent to you?

What reasons do you have to dance and be glad *even in the midst of your difficulty*?

Through what body part is David singing praise to God, according to verse 12?

What does that expression mean?

**Apply** today's verse by determining what it means for your soul to sing praise to God and do it.

Write David's prayer in verse 10 here. **Pray** it today in light of whatever trying situation you find yourself.

## DAY 30: PSALM 31

**A Psalm of Complaint and of Praise.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be ashamed;  
In Your righteousness deliver me.

<sup>2</sup> Incline Your ear to me, rescue me quickly; be to me a rock of strength,  
A stronghold to save me.

<sup>3</sup> For You are my rock and my fortress;  
For Your name's sake You will lead me and guide me.

<sup>4</sup> You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me,  
For You are my strength.

<sup>5</sup> Into Your hand I commit my spirit;  
You have ransomed me, O LORD, God of truth.

<sup>6</sup> I hate those who regard vain idols, but I trust in the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness,  
Because You have seen my affliction;  
You have known the troubles of my soul,

<sup>8</sup> And You have not given me over into the hand of the enemy;  
You have set my feet in a large place.

<sup>9</sup> Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;  
My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also.

<sup>10</sup> For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing;  
My strength has failed because of my iniquity,  
And my body has wasted away.

<sup>14</sup> But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD, I say, "You are my God."

<sup>15</sup> My times are in Your hand;  
Deliver me from the hand of my enemies  
and from those who persecute me.

<sup>16</sup> Make Your face to shine upon Your servant;  
Save me in Your lovingkindness.

<sup>17</sup> Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I call upon You;  
Let the wicked be put to shame, let them be silent in Sheol.

<sup>18</sup> Let the lying lips be mute, which speak arrogantly against the righteous  
With pride and contempt.

<sup>19</sup> How great is Your goodness,  
Which You have stored up for those who fear You,  
Which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You,  
Before the sons of men!

<sup>23</sup> O love the LORD, all you His godly ones! The LORD preserves the faithful and fully recompenses the proud doer.

<sup>24</sup> Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the LORD.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Like Psalms 18 and 22, today's psalm is too long to fit into one page; please consider these verses for our study today but make time to read it in its entirety after you complete the study.)

Read Psalm 31 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. [Don't forget the things we've observed before, such as the bold descriptions, the word *but*, repeating words or synonyms, and characteristics of God.]

The phrase "You are my \_\_\_\_" appears three times in today's psalm. Find and mark each of them.

The phrase "You will \_\_\_\_" appears twice in today's psalm. Find and mark both of them.

Write the second line of verse 8 here:

What does that mean?

Consider these other translations of this phrase:

"You set me free" (CEV)

"You enable me to stand in a wide open place"

"You liberated me and made me secure in a good and spacious land" (VOICE)

**Pray** this phrase from verse 8 today, voicing specific ways in which God has freed you.

Write the first phrase in verse 15.

What does that phrase mean?

**Apply** today's psalm by making verse 15 your statement of faith today. Take time to list at least five things that worry you. Offer those in prayer to the Lord and say, "My times are in your hand."

## DAY 31: PSALM 32

**Blessedness of Forgiveness and of Trust in God.  
A Psalm of David. A Maskil.**

<sup>1</sup>How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,  
Whose sin is covered!

<sup>2</sup>How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity,  
And in whose spirit there is no deceit!

<sup>3</sup>When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away  
Through my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup>For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;  
My vitality was drained away *as* with the fever heat of summer. *Selah.*

<sup>5</sup>I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD";  
And You forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah.*

<sup>6</sup>Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; surely in a flood of great waters  
they will not reach him.

<sup>7</sup>You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble;  
You surround me with songs of deliverance. *Selah.*

<sup>8</sup>I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go;  
I will counsel you with My eye upon you.

<sup>9</sup>Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding,  
Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check,  
Otherwise they will not come near to you.

<sup>10</sup>Many are the sorrows of the wicked,  
But he who trusts in the LORD, lovingkindness shall surround him.

<sup>11</sup>Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones;  
And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 32 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Did you observe the term *maskil* in the bold description? Mark it. A *maskil* could mean any of the following: *a contemplative poem, a song of loves, or a song that teaches you something*. What does this psalm teach you? (You may find the answer in verse 8.)

(Do you remember what *Selah* means? If not, refresh your memory when we first saw it in Psalm 3.)

The word *blessed* occurs twice in this psalm. Mark them.

The word *blessed* is also found in Psalm 1, Psalm 2, and Psalm 21. Look back at those instances and write what makes a person blessed in those passages:

Define the word *blessed* according to all you've observed in these psalms:

The phrase "I will" occurs 3 times in this psalm. Mark them.

What caused David anxiety in verses 3-4?

How did he respond, according to verse 5?

**Apply** today's psalm by following David's example: confess your sins. In silent stillness before the Lord, let the Holy Spirit bring your sins to your mind and repent of them.

What three commands or instructions does David give in verse 11? **Pray** today's psalm by following those instructions in your prayers today.

## DAY 32: PSALM 33

### **Praise to the Creator and Preserver.**

- <sup>1</sup> Sing for joy in the LORD, O you righteous ones;  
Praise is becoming to the upright.
- <sup>2</sup> Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;  
Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings.
- <sup>3</sup> Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy.
- <sup>4</sup> For the word of the LORD is upright,  
And all His work is done in faithfulness.
- <sup>5</sup> He loves righteousness and justice;  
The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD.
- <sup>6</sup> By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,  
And by the breath of His mouth all their host.
- <sup>7</sup> He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;  
He lays up the deeps in storehouses.
- <sup>8</sup> Let all the earth fear the LORD;  
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
- <sup>9</sup> For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.
- <sup>10</sup> The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations;  
He frustrates the plans of the peoples.
- <sup>11</sup> The counsel of the LORD stands forever,  
The plans of His heart from generation to generation.
- <sup>12</sup> Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,  
The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.
- <sup>13</sup> The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men;
- <sup>14</sup> From His dwelling place He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth,
- <sup>15</sup> He who fashions the hearts of them all,  
He who understands all their works.
- <sup>16</sup> The king is not saved by a mighty army;  
A warrior is not delivered by great strength.
- <sup>17</sup> A horse is a false hope for victory;  
Nor does it deliver anyone by its great strength.
- <sup>18</sup> Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,  
On those who hope for His lovingkindness,
- <sup>19</sup> To deliver their soul from death  
And to keep them alive in famine.
- <sup>20</sup> Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield.
- <sup>21</sup> For our heart rejoices in Him, because we trust in His holy name.
- <sup>22</sup> Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us,  
According as we have hoped in You.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 33 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. Write the description of this psalm, which is written in bold font above the text:

In order to easily see these praises, *circle* every phrase that describes God's creation and *underline* every phrase that describes how He preserves us.

Do we know the author of this psalm?

Today's psalm is a direct reflection of Genesis 1. Read that chapter in your Bible and write any phrases that are referenced in Psalm 33.

What is God creating in verse 15?

How does verse 15 reflect Psalm 51:10?

In your Bible read John 1:1-4. How is this passage a reflection of Psalm 33?

Who is John 1:1-4 describing?

Underline every instruction given to the listener or reader of this psalm. **Apply** today's psalm by doing the things instructed right now.

Today's psalm shares several similarities with Psalm 20. Go back and re-read it, reflecting on the phrases and ideas that are also revealed in Psalm 33.

**Pray** today's psalm by re-committing your life and trust to God alone. Confess that you sometimes put your trust in other powers. Carry verse 20 with you today as your commitment to wait and trust on God.

## DAY 33: PSALM 34

**The LORD, a Provider and Deliverer.**

***A Psalm of David when he feigned madness before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed.***

<sup>1</sup> I will bless the LORD at all times;

His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

<sup>2</sup> My soul will make its boast in the LORD;

The humble will hear it and rejoice.

<sup>3</sup> O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.

<sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and He answered me,

And delivered me from all my fears.

<sup>5</sup> They looked to Him and were radiant,

And their faces will never be ashamed.

<sup>6</sup> This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him

And saved him out of all his troubles.

<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him,

And rescues them.

<sup>8</sup> O taste and see that the LORD is good;

How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

<sup>9</sup> O fear the LORD, you His saints;

For to those who fear Him there is no want.

<sup>10</sup> The young lions do lack and suffer hunger;

But they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing.

<sup>11</sup> Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Who is the man who desires life

And loves length of days that he may see good?

<sup>13</sup> Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

<sup>14</sup> Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

<sup>15</sup> The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous

And His ears are open to their cry.

<sup>16</sup> The face of the LORD is against evildoers,

To cut off the memory of them from the earth.

<sup>17</sup> The righteous cry, and the LORD hears

And delivers them out of all their troubles.

<sup>18</sup> The LORD is near to the brokenhearted

And saves those who are crushed in spirit.

<sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous,

But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

<sup>20</sup> He keeps all his bones, not one of them is broken.

<sup>21</sup> Evil shall slay the wicked,

And those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD redeems the soul of His servants,

And none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 34 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you. In what situation did David write this psalm?

The name Abimelech appears to be a title for King Achish of Gath. If you're not familiar with that story, read it from 1 Samuel 21:10-15. Quickly summarize the passage here:

Now that you've reflected on David's situation, re-read Psalm 34 one more time. Knowing the circumstances really brings the prayer to life!

Re-read verses 13-14. How might these words reflect what David did—or wish he had done—in light of 1 Samuel 21:10-15?

Sometimes our prayers reflect God's faithfulness, but we are wise to also remember our own shortcomings and failures when we pour out our hearts to the Lord. Do that now: Where do you struggle in your faith?

In some psalms, David is speaking to his own soul. Sometimes, he's speaking directly to God. To whom is David speaking in this psalm?

What are some of the encouragements or instructions he gives? Circle them in the text.

**Apply** today's psalm by heeding the instructions and encouragements of David. Choose one or two of those things you circled and choose to obey them throughout the day.

Write the first phrase from verse 8:

Psalm 119:103 reveals a deeper meaning into this verse. What does it say?

Turn verse 8 into your **prayer** each time you eat a meal today, asking God to help you taste and see His goodness.

## DAY 34: PSALM 35

### Prayer for Rescue from Enemies. A Psalm of David.

- <sup>1</sup> Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me;  
Fight against those who fight against me.
- <sup>2</sup> Take hold of buckler and shield and rise up for my help.
- <sup>3</sup> Draw also the spear and the battle-axe to meet those who pursue me;  
Say to my soul, "I am your salvation."
- <sup>4</sup> Let those be ashamed and dishonored who seek my life;  
Let those be turned back and humiliated who devise evil against me.
- <sup>5</sup> Let them be like chaff before the wind,  
With the angel of the LORD driving them on.
- <sup>6</sup> Let their way be dark and slippery,  
With the angel of the LORD pursuing them.
- <sup>7</sup> For without cause they hid their net for me;  
Without cause they dug a pit for my soul.
- <sup>8</sup> Let destruction come upon him unawares,  
And let the net which he hid catch himself;  
Into that very destruction let him fall.
- <sup>9</sup> And my soul shall rejoice in the LORD;  
It shall exult in His salvation.
- <sup>10</sup> All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like You,  
Who delivers the afflicted from him who is too strong for him,  
And the afflicted and the needy from him who robs him?"
- <sup>16</sup> Like godless jesters at a feast, they gnashed at me with their teeth.
- <sup>17</sup> Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue my soul from their ravages,  
My only life from the lions.
- <sup>18</sup> I will give You thanks in the great congregation;  
I will praise You among a mighty throng.
- <sup>19</sup> Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me;  
Nor let those who hate me without cause wink maliciously.
- <sup>20</sup> For they do not speak peace,  
But they devise deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land.
- <sup>21</sup> They opened their mouth wide against me;  
They said, "Aha, aha, our eyes have seen it!"
- <sup>22</sup> You have seen it, O LORD, do not keep silent;  
O Lord, do not be far from me.
- <sup>23</sup> Stir up Yourself, and awake to my right  
And to my cause, my God and my Lord.
- <sup>28</sup> And my tongue shall declare Your righteousness  
And Your praise all day long.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Again, today's psalm is too long to fit into one page; please consider these verses for our study today but make time to read it in its entirety after you complete the study.)

Read Psalm 35 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

While some psalms contain praise or thanksgiving, this psalm is one of supplication, David's earnest please to God. Underline every request that David makes of God.

Look up the following passages and write what it teaches about prayer:

Psalm 34:17

Jeremiah 29:12

Jeremiah 33:3

Matthew 6:6-7

John 15:7

Philippians 4:6

David doesn't hold back; he lays out the wrongdoings of his enemies, offers suggestions for their punishment, and desperately requests the presence of God.

**Pray** today's psalm by following David's example. Speak to God exactly what is going on in your life.

In the midst of his requests, though, David makes three distinct statements of faith in verses 9, 18, and 28. Circle those.

Write one statement of faith—use one of David's or create your own—that you can honestly say today.

**Apply** today's psalm by doing exactly what verse 28 says: declare God's righteousness today as often as you can.

## DAY 35: PSALM 36

**Wickedness of Men and Lovingkindness of God.**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD.**

<sup>1</sup> Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart;

There is no fear of God before his eyes.

<sup>2</sup> For it flatters him in his own eyes

Concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it.

<sup>3</sup> The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit;

He has ceased to be wise and to do good.

<sup>4</sup> He plans wickedness upon his bed;

He sets himself on a path that is not good; He does not despise evil.

<sup>5</sup> Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens,

Your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

<sup>6</sup> Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;

Your judgments are like a great deep.

O LORD, You preserve man and beast.

<sup>7</sup> How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!

And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

<sup>8</sup> They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house;

And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights.

<sup>9</sup> For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.

<sup>10</sup> O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You,

And Your righteousness to the upright in heart.

<sup>11</sup> Let not the foot of pride come upon me,

And let not the hand of the wicked drive me away.

<sup>12</sup> There the doers of iniquity have fallen;

They have been thrust down and cannot rise.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 36 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Draw a bold line separating verses 1-4 from 5-12. Give each group of verses a descriptive title.

Review the bold description of the psalm. Why might David have paired the wickedness of men with the lovingkindness of the Lord?

What are some alternate translations for the term *lovingkindness*? (Look back at your study of Psalm 25 if you don't remember.)

Circle the word *lovingkindness* every time it appears.

(The word *lovingkindness* appears 24 times in Psalms 1-41. Consider taking time to find every occurrence of it in this study and making a list of what you learn about God's lovingkindness in these psalms.)

Read Ephesians 3:14-19 in your Bible. How do these verses reflect Psalm 36:5-6?

**Apply** today's psalm by focusing on God's lovingkindness in your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the opportunity to speak about God's lovingkindness to someone as you go about your day today.

Reflect on verse 8. How does John 7:37-38 relate to this verse?

Reflect on verse 9. How does John 1:4-5 reveal this light?

*Who* is the light in John 1:4-5 and the living water in John 7?

**Pray** today's psalm by acknowledging that Jesus was partially revealed in David's understanding of God. Praise God for the fulfillment of David's words in the person of Jesus.

## DAY 36: PSALM 37

### Security of Those Who Trust in the LORD, and Insecurity of the Wicked. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers.

<sup>2</sup> For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb.

<sup>3</sup> Trust in the LORD and do good;

Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.

<sup>4</sup> Delight yourself in the LORD;

And He will give you the desires of your heart.

<sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD,

Trust also in Him, and He will do it.

<sup>6</sup> He will bring forth your righteousness as the light

And your judgment as the noonday.

<sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him;

Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,

Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.

<sup>8</sup> Cease from anger and forsake wrath;

Do not fret; *it leads* only to evildoing.

<sup>14</sup> The wicked have drawn the sword and bent their bow

To cast down the afflicted and the needy,

To slay those who are upright in conduct.

<sup>15</sup> Their sword will enter their own heart, and their bows will be broken.

<sup>18</sup> The LORD knows the days of the blameless,

And their inheritance will be forever.

<sup>19</sup> They will not be ashamed in the time of evil,

And in the days of famine they will have abundance.

<sup>20</sup> But the wicked will perish;

And the enemies of the LORD will be like the glory of the pastures,

They vanish—like smoke they vanish away.

<sup>23</sup> The steps of a man are established by the LORD,

And He delights in his way.

<sup>24</sup> When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong,

Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.

<sup>27</sup> Depart from evil and do good, so you will abide forever.

<sup>40</sup> The LORD helps them and delivers them;

He delivers them from the wicked and saves them,

Because they take refuge in Him.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Once again, today's psalm is too long to fit into one page; please consider these verses for our study today but make time to read it in its entirety after you complete the study.)

Read Psalm 37 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Verses 3-8 contain at least ten commands. Circle each of them.

Underline the specifics of the commands. Specifically mark how we are to obey and what happens if we obey the commands in these verses.

**Apply** today's psalm by prayerfully considering the following questions:  
Which of these commands are you least likely to obey?

What blessings are you missing in your disobedience?

This psalm contains several contrasts between the wicked and the blameless. What does blameless mean, according to Psalm 19:12-13?

What is the ultimate destiny of the wicked, according to this psalm?

What is the ultimate destiny of those who follow the Lord?

Go back through today's psalm and put a star next to every description of God's blessing on those who live faithfully.

**Pray** today's psalm by meditating on verse 23. Thank God for establishing your steps in His wisdom and love. Carefully observe that He (God!) delights in us when we follow in His way. Walk obediently in God's way today, knowing you bring the Lord delight.

## DAY 37: PSALM 38

### Prayer of a Suffering Penitent. A Psalm of David, for a memorial.

<sup>1</sup>O LORD, rebuke me not in Your wrath,  
And chasten me not in Your burning anger.  
<sup>2</sup>For Your arrows have sunk deep into me,  
And Your hand has pressed down on me.  
<sup>3</sup>There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation;  
There is no health in my bones because of my sin.  
<sup>4</sup>For my iniquities are gone over my head;  
As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me.  
<sup>5</sup>My wounds grow foul and fester because of my folly.  
<sup>6</sup>I am bent over and greatly bowed down; I go mourning all day long.  
<sup>7</sup>For my loins are filled with burning,  
And there is no soundness in my flesh.  
<sup>8</sup>I am benumbed and badly crushed;  
I groan because of the agitation of my heart.  
<sup>9</sup>Lord, all my desire is before You; and my sighing is not hidden from You.  
<sup>10</sup>My heart throbs, my strength fails me;  
And the light of my eyes, even that has gone from me.  
<sup>11</sup>My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague;  
And my kinsmen stand afar off.  
<sup>12</sup>Those who seek my life lay snares for me;  
And those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction,  
And they devise treachery all day long.  
<sup>13</sup>But I, like a deaf man, do not hear;  
And *I am* like a mute man who does not open his mouth.  
<sup>14</sup>Yes, I am like a man who does not hear,  
And in whose mouth are no arguments.  
<sup>15</sup>For I hope in You, O LORD; You will answer, O Lord my God.  
<sup>16</sup>For I said, "May they not rejoice over me,  
Who, when my foot slips, would magnify themselves against me."  
<sup>17</sup>For I am ready to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me.  
<sup>18</sup>For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.  
<sup>19</sup>But my enemies are vigorous and strong,  
And many are those who hate me wrongfully.  
<sup>20</sup>And those who repay evil for good,  
They oppose me, because I follow what is good.  
<sup>21</sup>Do not forsake me, O LORD; O my God, do not be far from me!  
<sup>22</sup>Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 38 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Be sure to mark the title of today's psalm.

Here is how other translations describe it:

“To bring to remembrance” (AMP)

“to be used when an offering is made” (CEV)

“The prayer of a sufferer” (GNT)

“for remembrance” (HCSB)

What is David wanting to remember in writing this psalm?

As you observed, David is reflecting on the effects of his sin. In your own words, describe how sin affects us.

Why would David want to remember his sin and its effects?

Reflecting on our own sin isn't something we may want to do but it is something we *should* do so that we remember how its separation from God affects us physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually. **Apply** today's psalm by reading it again in light of your own sin and reflecting on how your sin has affected your life.

At which verse does David's attention shift *off* his own sin and onto God?

What are the actions David takes in verses 15-20?

**Pray** today's psalm by saying the words from verses 21-22 aloud.

## DAY 38: PSALM 39

### The Vanity of Life.

For the choir director, for Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> I said, "I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue;  
I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle  
While the wicked are in my presence."

<sup>2</sup> I was mute and silent, I refrained even from good,  
And my sorrow grew worse.

<sup>3</sup> My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned;  
Then I spoke with my tongue:

<sup>4</sup> "LORD, make me to know my end and what is the extent of my days;  
Let me know how transient I am.

<sup>5</sup> "Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths,  
And my lifetime as nothing in Your sight;  
Surely every man at his best is a mere breath. *Selah.*

<sup>6</sup> "Surely every man walks about as a phantom;  
Surely they make an uproar for nothing;  
He amasses riches and does not know who will gather them.

<sup>7</sup> "And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You.

<sup>8</sup> "Deliver me from all my transgressions;  
Make me not the reproach of the foolish.

<sup>9</sup> "I have become mute, I do not open my mouth,  
Because it is You who have done it.

<sup>10</sup> "Remove Your plague from me;  
Because of the opposition of Your hand I am perishing.

<sup>11</sup> "With reproofs You chasten a man for iniquity;  
You consume as a moth what is precious to him;  
Surely every man is a mere breath. *Selah.*

<sup>12</sup> "Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry;  
Do not be silent at my tears; for I am a stranger with You,  
A sojourner like all my fathers.

<sup>13</sup> "Turn Your gaze away from me, that I may smile again  
Before I depart and am no more."

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 39 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

To whom is this psalm written, according to the bold description?

If you're not familiar with Jeduthun, look at 1 Chronicles 16:37-42. What was his role?

What did David decide to do in verse 1?

What was the result, according to verses 2-3?

What is David's assessment of life, according to verses 4-6?

If these words sound familiar to you, it's because David's son, Solomon, wrote at length about this same topic in the book of Ecclesiastes. Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 and note any similarities you see in Psalm 39.

The word "vanity" can also be translated *pointless, useless, futile, smoke, meaningless, and fleeting*. Re-read Psalm 39 and write David's attitude toward human life when he wrote this psalm.

Much of Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes reflect the same attitude. However, Solomon came to a bold conclusion. Read Ecclesiastes 4:13-14 and summarize Solomon's wisdom:

**Pray** today's psalm by asking God to give you an accurate assessment of your life according to His Word. Speak verse 7 as a reminder that He is the source and purpose of your life.

**Apply** today's psalm by choosing to accept God's seasons for your life (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8). Open your heart to God about your struggles to understand your life's purpose and limited time.

## DAY 39: PSALM 40

**God Sustains His Servant. For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me and heard my cry.

<sup>2</sup> He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay,  
And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.

<sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;  
Many will see and fear and will trust in the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> How blessed is the man who has made the LORD his trust,  
And has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood.

<sup>5</sup> Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders which You have done,  
And Your thoughts toward us; there is none to compare with You.  
If I would declare and speak of them,  
They would be too numerous to count.

<sup>6</sup> Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; my ears You have opened; burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, "Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

<sup>8</sup> I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."

<sup>9</sup> I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation;  
Behold, I will not restrain my lips, O LORD, You know.

<sup>10</sup> I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart;  
I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation;  
I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation.

<sup>11</sup> You, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me;  
Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.

<sup>12</sup> For evils beyond number have surrounded me; my iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see; they are more numerous than the hairs of my head, and my heart has failed me.

<sup>13</sup> Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me; make haste, O LORD, to help me.

<sup>14</sup> Let those be ashamed and humiliated together  
Who seek my life to destroy it;  
Let those be turned back and dishonored who delight in my hurt.

<sup>15</sup> Let those be appalled because of their shame  
Who say to me, "Aha, aha!"

<sup>16</sup> Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;  
Let those who love Your salvation say continually,  
"The LORD be magnified!"

<sup>17</sup> Since I am afflicted and needy, let the Lord be mindful of me.  
You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 40 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

Did you notice the word *lovingkindness* appears twice in this psalm? Consider all you observed about that word in your Psalm 36 and add these insights to it.

Write the opening phrase from this psalm:

What does Psalm 37:7 say about waiting patiently for God?

What does Hebrews 6:13-18 teach you about the benefits of waiting patiently for God?

Psalm 40:2 contains David's 1-sentence testimony. What would your 1-sentence testimony be?

Verse 3 records what happens when we are willing to share our testimony with others. Underline it.

Pause right now and ask God to give you the opportunity to **apply** today's psalm by sharing your one-sentence testimony today, allowing "many" to "see and fear and trust in the Lord."

What does God *not* want, according to verse 6?

What *does* God want, according to verse 8?

Today's psalm contains many examples of David's prayers for help as well as his statements of faith. **Pray** today's psalm by choosing the phrase or verse that fits your heart and mind today.

## DAY 40: PSALM 41

**The Psalmist in Sickness Complains of Enemies and False Friends.  
For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup> How blessed is he who considers the helpless;  
The LORD will deliver him in a day of trouble.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD will protect him and keep him alive,  
And he shall be called blessed upon the earth;  
And do not give him over to the desire of his enemies.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD will sustain him upon his sickbed;  
In his illness, You restore him to health.

<sup>4</sup> As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me;  
Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."

<sup>5</sup> My enemies speak evil against me,  
"When will he die, and his name perish?"

<sup>6</sup> And when he comes to see me, he speaks falsehood;  
His heart gathers wickedness to itself; when he goes outside, he tells it.

<sup>7</sup> All who hate me whisper together against me;  
Against me they devise my hurt, saying,

<sup>8</sup> "A wicked thing is poured out upon him,  
That when he lies down, he will not rise up again."

<sup>9</sup> Even my close friend in whom I trusted,  
Who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

<sup>10</sup> But You, O LORD, be gracious to me and raise me up,  
That I may repay them.

<sup>11</sup> By this I know that You are pleased with me,  
Because my enemy does not shout in triumph over me.

<sup>12</sup> As for me, You uphold me in my integrity,  
And You set me in Your presence forever.

<sup>13</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,  
From everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen.

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 41 slowly and deliberately in order to **listen** with your eyes. If possible, read it out loud.

Now read it again to **observe**. Mark any words or phrases that stand out to you.

We've looked at the word *blessed* several times throughout this study. Did you mark it three times in today's psalm?

What leads to blessing, according to verse 1?

How is verse 1 reflected in James 1:27?

What is the bold description of this psalm?

According to verse 4, what kind of healing is David seeking?

Verse 4 is so powerful. **Pray** that verse right now for yourself and for any others that God brings to your mind.

David makes two statements of faith in verse 12, each starting with the word "You." Circle those two phrases.

**Apply** today's psalm by personalizing verse 12: How does God uphold you? How are you experiencing God's presence? Write these personal statements in the margins.

We find ourselves at the end of this study: Psalm 41 is the end of Book 1 of the Psalms. Notice the "double Amen" in verse 13; it occurs also at the end of Book 2 and Book 3 of the Psalms.

What comes to mind when you think of all you've heard, observed, prayed, and applied over the past 40 days?

We pray that your prayerful consideration of these psalms does not end just because you completed the study. Use these psalms for meditation, wisdom, prayers, praise, understanding, and a deeper knowledge of who God is.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

This Study Bible is the result of a collaboration of several minds seeking to honor God and edify this church. Pastor Mike Miller wanted to have a resource that would help us, as a congregation, know how to hear God's Word and dwell on it throughout the day. He presented the idea to Leslie Hudson, who put the Scriptures and study ideas on paper. But the glue who held these two together was Barbara Adams, who noticed every detail and kept them both on track. We pray that you will be blessed and God will be glorified.

*Let this be written for the generation to come,  
That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord.*

Psalm 102:18