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170 Lessons from the Book of Psalms

By Ken Raggio

David Taught Us To Delight Ourselves In The LORD

We have David to thank for most of the Psalms. His songs and lyrics articulate a broad spectrum of praise, worship, and exaltation of the LORD. The Psalms also include volumes of wise counsel and poignant prayers. What other book promotes more intimate relationship with God through prayer and praise?

Psalms 1:1 - "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

The Righteous Are Like A Great Tree

David was a great preacher. His exhortations are among the most quoted in all religious literature. David had profound understanding of great spiritual truths, and he articulated them well. He knew that godly people are strong and hearty because God makes it so. He compared them to a great and fruitful tree planted by a river. But sinners are like chaff that blows away. In the end of all things, the righteous will endure, but ungodly and sinners will be banished.

Psalms 1:6 - "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

Ask Of Me, I Will Give Thee The Heathen

The psalmist asked, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." But God in heaven will laugh at these scoffers, and have them in derision and vexation. Ultimately, God will give His anointed dominion over them all.

Psalms 2:8 - "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Prayer - A Consolation Against Adversaries

When king David fled from his evil-hearted son, Absalom, prayer became David's coping mechanism. He vented his anxieties to God: "They are increased that rise up against me," "Many say there is no help for me," and more. But David cried, "You, LORD, are a shield for me! My glory! Lifter up of my head." He rejoiced that God heard his prayers, gave him rest, sleep, and confidence to be unafraid of even ten thousands of enemies.

Psalms 3:7 - "Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone."

Praying With Musical Accompaniment

David sent the fourth Psalm to the chief temple musician on "Neginoth" (meaning "stringed instruments"). David wanted lyres and harps to accompany this prayer. It juxtaposes those who dishonor God and love vanities and lies, with the righteous, whom God sets apart and hears when they pray. Great truths deserve to be orchestrated. Play and sing your prayers.

Psalms 4:7-8 - "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety."

Plan to Pray

On your TO-DO list, prayer should have top priority among all the things you plan to do. If prayer is not a high priority on your daily schedule, it will almost certainly get bumped off the list entirely by the end of the day. For many years, I have forced myself to maintain a certain amount of prayer time daily. If I miss the mark, I compensate the next time.

Psalm 5:3 - "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee."

Pray Your Way Out Of Distress

Sooner or later, most of us run into some great distress. The worst distress is our own failure before Almighty God. David cried, "rebuke me not, ...neither chasten me, ...have mercy, ...heal me, ...deliver my soul, ...save me." He shooed away death and the grave as no relief, and discharged the groanings and tears caused by his enemies.

Psalm 6: 8-10 - "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping. The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed."

Console Yourself While Praying

When we recall David's fugitive years running from King Saul, we know Saul could not hurt David because God was for him. But in the heat of the moment, David was not so sure. He prayed that God would deliver him from the lion that was tearing at his soul, "rending it in pieces." Then he consoled himself. "God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready."

Psalms 7:13 - "He hath also prepared ...instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors."

What Is Man?

David contemplated the heavens of God - the moon, the stars - and asked why God is mindful of mere man. It is incomprehensible that in this seemingly infinite universe, Almighty God considers such a speck as me. But He DOES!

Psalm 8:4-6 - "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."

Affirming God's Vindication And Judgment

David had a profound conviction that God would ultimately vindicate the righteous and judge the wicked. His countless prayers reiterate two themes. Often targeted by jealous and hateful men, David prayed and trusted that God would sustain him in the face of sore opposition. He believed that, in the end, God would punish evil people and reward the faithful and righteous.

Psalms 9:10,17 - "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. ...The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Praying Against The Wicked

David prayed hard against the wicked. He named many offenses: pride, devices, covetous desires that God abhors, spurning God, cursing, deceit, fraud, mischief, vanity, lurking to catch the weak and poor. David urged the LORD not to stand afar or hide himself from the wicked. "Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none." We should pray relentlessly that wickedness will be overthrown and righteousness will prevail.

Psalms 10:11,18 - "Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: ...that the man of the earth may no more oppress."

Upon The Wicked He Shall Rain Snares

"In the LORD put I my trust." Not many men before him spoke in such clarion terms. David confessed his total dependence upon God for his survival. Why say to my soul, "Flee as a bird to your mountain?" When the wicked draw their bows against us, "His eyes behold." "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven." God's watchfulness consoles all the righteous.

Psalms 11:5 - "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone."

Praying Against Dishonest, Threatening People

A godly person craves to see others living godly lives. But David felt as though everyone around him was dishonest or threatening. "Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail, ...They speak ...with flattering lips and with a double heart." When you feel oppressed by phonies, flatterers, dishonest, intimidating or threatening people, remembered that God's words are pure, as silver tried in a furnace, and faithful for eternal generations. Though men fail, God never fails.

Psalm 12:5 - "Now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

How long, O LORD?

"O LORD! How long will you forget me? How long will you hide Your face from me? How long will I search for a cure for my sorrow? How long will my enemies overpower me?" Obviously, David believed God knew the answer to those questions, or he would not have asked. Rather than die in despair, or surrender to his enemies, David forced his expectations heavenward. We should, too.

Psalms 13:5 - "But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me."

God Save Us From Fools

Sing this. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." David wrote this song of Psalm 14 on that theme. Fools, corrupt, abominable, ne'er-do-good types. God sees them all. He sees how filthy they are, how they devour righteous men like bread, how they mock the wisdom of poor men. But do not fear. God will someday vindicate His righteous people.

Psalm 14:7 - "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

The Kind Of People Who Dwell In God's Holy Places

The people of God are identifiably different from the rest of the world. The world is corrupt and vile. God's people are sanctified by obedience to the will of God. What kind of person dwells in God's tabernacle, in His holy hill? Those who walk uprightly, work righteousness, and speak the truth. These are not backbiters. They do no evil to their neighbors. The righteous despise and scorn vile people, but honor those who fear the LORD. They keep their oaths, and lend without interest.

Psalms 15:5 "He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

David Prophesies The Resurrection

Peter quoted extensively from Psalm 16 on the day of Pentecost. "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, ...Therefore did my heart rejoice, ...Because thou wilt not leave my soul in

hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. ...Therefore being a prophet, ...He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ." David foretold Jesus' resurrection 1000 years before He was born. It could have referred to no other.

Psalms 16:10 - "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

Fulness Of Joy, Pleasures For Evermore

David ruminated with joy about his life in God, and his delight to have fellowship with the saints of God. He bemoaned others who worshipped other gods, and promised that he would never make sacrifices to other gods or ever speak well of them. God, he said, is my inheritance, and he will always be at the forefront of my life. "Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

Psalms 16:11 - "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Deliver My Soul From The Wicked

Add up all the prayers David prayed for God to deliver him from his enemies. Compare them to the many victories David won. "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings, From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about." Learn this lesson. David overcame many enemies because he was a prayer warrior. Declare war with prayer. "Deliver us from all evil." Let God arise and His enemies be scattered.

Psalms 17:13 - "Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked."

Pray First

A predisposition is a pre-planned policy. David was predisposed to pray anytime trouble arose. Prayer should be our first recourse. It should be so embedded in our psyche that every time trouble comes, we begin to pray almost as quickly as a "knee-jerk" reaction. Pray before doing anything else. A veteran pastor I know refuses to counsel anyone unless they assure him they have already prayed earnestly about their problem.

Psalms 18:3 - "I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies."

The LORD, My Rock

David had great visions of God. Rock. Fortress. Deliverer. Strength. Buckler. Salvation. High tower. "He will save me from my enemies." All these things inspired and emboldened David. "For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall. ...For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God? ...He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places." O, magnify the LORD!

Psalms 18:46 - "The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

Thy Words Are Perfect. Make Mine Acceptable.

The heavens declare the glory of God. The firmament shows His handiwork. Days speak. Nights bring knowledge. God's voice is everywhere. "His going forth is from the end of the heaven. ...The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. ...More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

Psalms 19:14 - "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."

I Believe In Prayer

This song of David encourages and affirms prayer. "The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; ...send thee help from the sanctuary (His temple), ...grant thee according to thine own heart,the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand." Pray confidently. Nothing moves God more than the prayers of the righteous.

Psalms 20:7,8 - "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright."

Kingship Is Endowed By God

One of the greatest tragedies of modern times is the failure of kings and presidents to recognize the sovereignty of God over their governance. David emphatically acknowledged God's endowments upon his kingship. He rejoiced and gave thanks for God's blessings, both temporal and eternal. "For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance." In contrast, he declared that God will find out His enemies and remove them.

Psalms 21:7 - "For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved."

My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?

Psalms 22 contains several amazing Messianic prophecies. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? ...All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ...He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." All were fulfilled in Jesus. The spirit of prophecy was mightily upon David.

Psalms 22:18,22 - "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. ...I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee."

Made To Lie Down

You can fly through life at rat-race speed, or you can slow down and know God. Even if you win the rat-race, you're still a rat. Slow down. Be still and know God. You won't find God in the noise, haste, or insanity. Study to be quiet. If you don't, and yet desire a relationship with God, He will have to slow you down. You may scream and kick against Him, but finally discover the truth. His way is best.

Psalms 23:2 - "He maketh me to lie down..."

The LORD Is My Shepherd

Every line of the 23rd Psalm contains a powerful message. As my shepherd, the LORD leads me to green pastures and still waters for rest and restoration. He leads me in righteous paths for the glory of His name. When death threatens, I am not afraid, because He is with me. He anoints me, and comforts me, and feeds me even when enemies are near. He fills my cup to overflowing.

Psalms 23:6 - "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

The King Of Glory Shall Come In

David stressed that the earth and its fulness, and everyone therein - is the LORD's. Abraham anticipated a holy city whose builder and maker was God. David anticipated the King of Glory entering the gates of the city of Jerusalem. Those with clean hands and clean hearts will someday ascend into His holy place and see Him there.

Psalms 24:9,10 - "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Let Me Not Be Ashamed

David often prayed something like this: "Let me not be ashamed." David was profoundly ashamed of his own sins and mistakes, and frequently abased himself verbally. He asked God to cover his sins and help him stand. On the other hand, David often prayed that his enemies would be ashamed because they dared take sides against God and His anointed.

Psalms 25:2-3 - "O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause."

Contrasting Job and David

There are many similarities between Job's self-defense and David's self-defense before God. But God was not so confrontational or harsh with David as He was with Job. It appears that David was much more forthcoming to admit his mistakes. He profusely asked God to redeem him from his errors and mercifully forgive him. It is always best to quickly confess your sins and repent.

Psalms 26:1-2,9 - "Judge me, O LORD, ...Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart. ...Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men."

The House of God

No man-made building on earth is more sacred than the house of God. In these days of multi-purpose buildings, gymnasiums and recreation centers, we need a place where we can find a sanctuary, a holy, sanctified environment for prayer, praise and the preaching of the Word. I love God's house.

Psalms 27:4 - "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; 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 enquire in his temple."

God Save The Righteous, Judge The Wicked

In our world of forced political correctness, the wicked demand respect, and the righteous are assaulted. But David clearly favored the righteous who feared God. "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: ...and lift them up for ever."

Psalms 28:3-4 - "Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts. Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: ...Because they regard not the works of the LORD, ...he shall destroy them, and not build them up."

The LORD Sitteth King Forever

"The LORD sitteth King forever," David proclaimed. This should be a self-evident truth, yet multitudes of anti-God protestors would banish the Creator from His creation if they could. But in prophetic terms, His kingship can never be challenged. David reminded us that God's voice is on the waters, in the thunder, all powerful, full of majesty, and more. He exhorts us to give to the LORD the glory due to His name. "Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."

Psalms 29:10-11 - "The LORD sitteth King for ever. The LORD will give strength unto his people."

Joy Comes In The Morning

David wrote a song for all the saints to sing with thanksgiving when the temple was finally dedicated. He praised God for saving him from his foes and healing him. "His anger endures but a moment, ...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." David prayed that God would spare him from early death. He knew the dead cannot praise Him or teach His truth. The new temple would be cause for glorious celebrations, a testimony to countless victories over unspeakable adversities.

Psalms 30:12 - "O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever."

My Times Are In Thy Hands

We remember David as a great warrior and a mighty king, but in his day, David agonized with God. He trusted God as his rock, his fortress. "Into thine hand I commit my spirit," (a Messianic prophecy), was David's sighing resignation in the face of many griefs, reproaches and slanders. "I am like a broken vessel." His confession, "My times are in thy hands," meant that David still trusted God's guidance, though enemies threatened and times were dark.

Psalms 31:24 - "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD."

Confession And Repentance Bring Blessing

David's "Beatitudes" said, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Before David confessed his sins, he said that his "bones waxed old" and his "moisture" was turned into

summer drought. But when he confessed and repented, he found a hiding place in God, and a song of deliverance to sing. Need energizing? Try repenting.

Psalms 32:10 - "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about."

Blessed Is The Nation Whose God Is The LORD

In all the history of mankind, few nations have prospered as Israel and the United States. Tragically, however, we are witnessing the meltdown of a once great civilization, because the countries which were founded by men who worshipped and honored the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have now turned their backs on Him and gone after "strange flesh" (homosexuality) and other gods - the gods of the heathen. No power on earth can override this prophecy.

Psalms 33:12 - "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

This Poor Man Cried, And The LORD Heard Him

In younger days, David fled from King Saul's wrath to Philistine country. He hoped to remain anonymous for safety's sake, but unfortunately, some men recognized David. He feared that the king of Gath would capture him, so in desperation, David feigned madness to convince the king that he was no threat to him. That exasperating experience later inspired David to write a marvelous song of praise, Psalm 34. Sometimes, our most terrifying experiences become the greatest sources of inspiration.

Psalms 34:6 - "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."

Guardian Angels

Virtually every major Bible character had a personal encounter with an angel of the LORD. There was at least one angel in nearly every great story. From the cherub at the gate of the Garden of Eden, including Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, David, Hezekiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Jesus, Peter, Paul and others. The angels of the LORD were there as ministering spirits to those who shall be the heirs of salvation. Yours is there right now.

Psalms 34:7 - "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

I Will Bless The LORD At All Times

Psalm 34 contains several of the most-quoted verses in the Bible, probably because David's exclamations were so relevant to all our predicaments. It is a good read and a worthy bookmark in any time of trouble. "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: ...O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together." A great chapter to memorize.

Psalms 34:8 - "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

Many Are The Afflictions Of The Righteous

Who is righteous, if not Christ? Who was afflicted, if not Christ? At Gethsemane, his heart was broken. His contrite spirit surrendered to eternal purpose. David spoke prophetically of all the righteous, but especially Christ.

Psalms 34:17-20 - "The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."

Praying For Judgment On Enemies

Jesus cursed a fig tree because it did not bear fruit according to His wishes. But His action was typological. The entire Jewish nation would be judged for rejecting their Messiah. We are obliged to give equal weight to both the goodness and severity of God. His mercy and grace is boundless to repentant seekers, but His wrath is inevitable to those who persistently oppose Him. David justifiably prayed God's judgment on those who warred against his soul.

Psalms 35:1 - "Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me."

The Battle For The Soul Of Man

The thirty-fifth Psalm demonstrates David's grave concern for his soul. "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." "Let them be put to shame that seek after my soul." "They hid for me their net in a pit ...for my soul." "They rewarded me evil... to the spoiling of my soul." "Rescue my soul from their destructions." David called his soul, "my darling." I must overcome the enemies of my soul at any cost. David invoked supernatural intervention.

Psalm 35:5-6 – "Let the angel of the LORD chase them. ...Let the angel of the LORD persecute them."

God Is The Fountain Of Life

The wicked have no fear of God. They flatter themselves and become hateful. They speak evil and deception. They reject wisdom and good deeds. They devise mischief. But God in heaven shows His faithfulness, righteousness, judgments and lovingkindness to those who trust Him. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

Psalms 36:10 - "O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart."

The Meek Shall Inherit The Earth

Do not fret over evildoers. Do not envy sinners. "For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; ...Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him."

Psalms 37:9 - "For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the

LORD, they shall inherit the earth."

A Safety Net

Famed aerialist, Karl Wallenda died at age 73 while attempting to walk a wire suspended 123 feet in the air between two hotels in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He had no safety net. An aerialist's life depends on the safety net. One simple mistake can result in sudden death. In the same way, only one transgression against God's laws means certain death. But God's amazing grace saves our lives again and again.

Psalms 37:24 - "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand."

Praying Your Way Out Of Depression

David was deeply depressed, and suffering from some disease. "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. ...my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. ...My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore." He mourned God's heavy-handed punishments for past sins. Still, he prayed for help.

Psalms 38:15, 21-22 - "For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God. ...Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation."

Jeduthun, The Chief Musician

Jeduthun, Asaph and Heman were musicians on trumpet, cymbals, psaltries, harps and other stringed instruments. David wrote three psalms (39, 62, 77) dedicated to Jeduthun, apparently to be sung by a choir. All three songs were much longer than those we are accustomed to hearing today. But they had a richer, more poignant message than songs nowadays. Perhaps we should invest more meaning into our modern songs than seven words sung eleven times.

Psalms 39:4 - "LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."

An Unbridled Tongue Brings Divine Rebuke

This song-prayer languishes God's stroke of rebuke. David promises to be much more careful with his tongue, and keep his mouth with a bridle, because he has suffered so much from his previous errors. "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue." Always engage your brain before running your mouth.

Psalms 39:10-11 - "Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth."

I Come To Do Thy Will, O God

Paul quoted from Psalm 40 in Hebrews 10. David prophesied of Christ. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God," vs. 5-7. David spoke of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Psalms 40:7 - "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me."

Heal My Soul

David had a sick soul. "Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish? ...An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more." But he remembered God's goodness. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive." Do not believe the prognosis rendered by your enemies. Talk to God.

Psalms 41:4 - "I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee."

Mine Own Familiar Friend, In Whom I Trusted

At the Last Supper, Jesus sopped the bread and gave it to Judas Iscariot, who then betrayed him. He said, "I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me," John 13:18. 1000 years earlier, King David suffered a devastating betrayal loaded with prophetic implications of Christ. In the heat of your trial, remember God has a purpose.

Psalms 41:9 - "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."

Deep Calleth Unto Deep

David elaborated his hunger and thirst for God. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." So, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" Then a curious observation, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts." Like a dreadful monsoon or tornado dips down from the sky and siphons water from the sea, the deep of God calls to the deep of man amidst great turmoil.

Psalms 42:11 - "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God."

Light And Truth Lead Me To Thy Holy Hill

Despondency was a frequent visitor to David. Same enemies. Same frustrations. Same questions. But every time, David prayed to God and his spirit revived.

Psalms 43:3 - "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him."

For Thy Sake We Are Killed

David was smothering in negativity. He remembered old stories - how God miraculously brought Israel from Egypt into the promised land, but lamented their present defeats and woes. He confessed his confusion about why things were so bad. "For thy sake are we killed all the day long." But you should never fall out with God over a few bad days. In the long tale, God always intervenes for His people. Prayer brings change.

Psalms 44:24,26 - "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression? ...Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake."

David Celebrates King Jesus

"My heart is inditing a good matter," David exclaimed. Inditing means gushing or bubbling forth. He proceeded to celebrate the King. But WHAT king is he celebrating? Not himself - the verses do not fit. Some say he was celebrating his son, Solomon. Perhaps. But verses 6-7 can only refer to the Son of Man, Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Psalms 45:6 - "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Selah - Pause And Think About It

Over seventy times, a psalm ends with the word "Selah." It means "pause and think about it." Every divine truth deserves a "selah." "Selah" occurred three times in Psalm 46, each time following an assertion that God is our refuge. Some think this psalm was written while Israel was under siege. When you feel you are under siege, take refuge in God. Selah.

Psalm 46: 1-2 - "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

There Is A River

No river flows through Jerusalem presently. But the prophets David, Isaiah (66:12), Ezekiel (47) and Zechariah (14:8), say a river will flow from the threshold of the temple in Jerusalem and divide eastward to the Dead Sea and westward to the Mediterranean. It also symbolizes the peace and rest that will characterize the reign of Messiah, Jesus Christ, as He rules over all the earth from Jerusalem for 1000 years.

Psalms 46:4 - "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High."

David: Christ To Be Exalted Following Armageddon

After speaking prophetically of a river in Jerusalem, the city of God, David continued, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, ...The LORD of hosts is with us; ...what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth." He prophesied the war to end all wars - Armageddon - followed by crowning Jesus in Jerusalem as King of Kings.

Psalms 46:10 - "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

Clapping, Shouting, Singing, Praising

It is unthinkable that God, in all His glorious majesty, might not be praised by His creation. "The LORD most high is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth." He will subdue all people and all nations. He will give His people their

promised inheritance. So let us all exalt Him - with a shout, with a trumpet, singing praises to the King of all the earth! Applaud Him! Cheer Him! Lift your voice in songs and praise the LORD!

Psalms 47:1 - "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph."

The City Of The Great King

Jerusalem is "the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. ...Mark ye well her bulwarks [walls, fortresses]." The UN cannot have it. The Catholic Church cannot have it. The Muslims cannot have it. Jerusalem belongs to Jehovah Savior. Jesus Christ will soon retake it at Armageddon.

Psalms 48:8 - "So have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever."

You Can't Take It With You

David discounted life without hope in God. "Both low and high, rich and poor, ...They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: ...For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others." Worldly assets are no asset at all in eternity. Put your treasures in Heaven.

Psalms 49:15 - "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me."

Asaph Prophecies Christ At Armageddon

Asaph, one of David's chief musicians, wrote the Messianic Psalm 50, of Christ with His saints at Armageddon. Here is what he said: God has shined out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, unto the whole earth. God will come. He will not keep silent. A fire will devour before Him. A great tempest will surround Him. He will call and gather all His covenant saints from heaven to earth. He will judge His people and the heavens will declare His righteousness.

Psalms 50:5,7 - "Gather my saints together unto me; ...O Israel, ...I am God, even thy God."

God Rejects False Claims On His Covenant

God published a fearful warning to sinners who claim the blessings of His covenant. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" He blasted them for hating instructions, casting away His word, consenting with criminals, partaking with adulterers, and speaking evil and deceit. God rejects all false claims on His covenant. If you want His blessings, get your act together now.

Psalms 50:22 - "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

Offer Thanksgiving. Offer Praise. Call Upon Me.

The psalmist exhorted Israel to call on God. Weary of their heartless rituals, God transcended the law to make an offer of grace. God said, "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds." "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee." He warned the wicked to consider, lest He tear them to pieces.

Psalms 50:23 - "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God."

David's Repentance

David's sin with Bathsheba was devastating, and Nathan prophesied grievous punishment. Psalm 51 records David's repentance.

Psalms 51:1 - "[A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.] Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

God Will Not Despise A Broken And Contrite Heart

Nathan's rebuke mortified David, so he turned to a painful soul-searching. "I was shapen in iniquity," and conceived in sin, but God requires "truth in the inward parts," and wisdom in the hidden places. He knew he could not cleanse himself. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. ...Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Psalms 51:17 - "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Doeg Threatens David

In Psalm 52, David overcame his enemy with a bold statement of faith. David fled Saul's assassination attempts to the priest Ahimelech at Nob, (1 Samuel 21) but Saul's servant, Doeg was in town and threatened him. Great men of God consistently assert their faith in God during their fearful trials.

Psalms 52:1 - "[To the chief Musician, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.] Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually."

God Despises Atheists

For the second time, David declared, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But he added more. Atheists are corrupt. They commit abominable iniquities. They do no good. God looks on this, and sees that they are filthy. They eat up God's people like bread. But God will scatter their bones and put them to shame because He despises them, and will show His vengeance.

Psalms 53:6 - "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

When Enemies Pursue, God Will Help

David wrote a song about his terrifying experience while running from Saul. Twice, in 1 Samuel 23 & 26, David fled Saul's wrath to the wilderness of Ziph. Both times, someone tattled on David to Saul. David's only advantage was prayer. "Save me, O God, by thy name, ...For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul." When pursuing enemies are closing in, you can call on God for help.

Psalms 54:4 - "Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul. He shall reward evil unto mine enemies."

A Prophecy About Judas Iscariot In Psalms

"It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." From an intimate dinner with Jesus, to the hill of evil counsel, God foresaw Judas.

Psalms 55:15 - "Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings."

Pray Without Ceasing

You really can pray all day long. Talking to God is as simple as talking with a friend who is riding in your car. God is with you 24/7. Why not talk with Him all day long? Everything needs a "prayer covering;" more than "dinner grace." Getting a job? Talk to God. Buying a house? Talk to God. Looking for a new dentist? Talk to God. Choosing a college major? Talk to God.

Psalms 55:17 - "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice."

When I Cry Unto Thee, My Enemies Turn Back

Long ago, when David fled to Gath from Saul's treachery, he sought asylum for a little while. But the Philistines of Gath did not want this Jewish hero in their midst, and demanded the king of Gath send David away. David was in dire straits. He cried to God, "Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most High. What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

Psalms 56:8 - "Put thou my tears into thy bottle, ..When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back."

My Heart Is Fixed

When David stumbled upon Saul (who was pursuing to kill him) in a cave, David cried, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." A true believer spontaneously calls on God in every crisis because his heart is fixed on God.

Psalms 57:7 - "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. ...For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds."

There Is A Reward For The Righteous

Do you speak righteousness? Do you judge uprightly? Is there wickedness in your heart, or violence in your hands? The wicked go astray from the womb, speaking lies, stopping their ears, like poisonous serpents. God will break them. He will melt them. He will take them away. The righteous will rejoice at God's vengeance against the wicked. Here is all the preaching you should need to hear to convert your soul: "There shall be no reward to the evil man," Proverbs 24:20. So simple, but so profound.

Psalms 58:11 - "Verily there is a reward for the righteous."

In Times Of Trouble, I Will Sing

Saul made a total of twenty-one attempts to kill David. David's recourse was always the same - call on God. "Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me. ...they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me." During his gravest dangers, David wrote poetry and sang songs to the LORD!

Psalms 59:16 - "But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble."

Moab Is My Washpot

David contemplated several regional conflicts he faced, and declared, "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, ...Gilead is mine, ...Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; ...Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe." Concerning Moab, God washed away that incestuous seed of Lot. Concerning Edom, Jews cast out their shoe when they forfeited property. God forfeited Edom (Esau's descendants) - separated from Jacob's seed.

Psalms 60:11-12 - "Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies."

Lead Me To The Rock

When you are overwhelmed, go to the Rock. When enemies encroach, run to the strong tower. The psalmist trusted in the covert of God's wings. He said he would abide in His tabernacle forever. He believed that God would preserve him, and prolong his life. Nobody is safe alone. I call Him Jesus, My Rock.

Psalms 61:2 - "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy."

He ONLY Is My Rock. I Shall Not Be Moved.

A choir leader named Ethan received this song from David. It was a psalm to encourage the people to trust in God. Look at the keywords he used throughout the song to refer to God: "HE ONLY IS my rock and my salvation." My defense. My expectation. My glory. My strength. My refuge. With such a great God, "...I shall not be moved."

Psalms 62:1,8 - "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my

salvation. ...Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah."

Thy Lovingkindness Is Better Than Life

The Psalms were not written in one sitting; not carefully outlined; not chronological. They were concocted on countless occasions, often on the run, especially during great trials, when these declarations, praises and prayers were literally the key to David's survival. They are poignant and inspiring. Once, while David was hiding in the wilderness of Judea, this phrase popped into his head. It is pregnant with meaning. Borrow it.

Psalms 63:3 - "Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name."

The Arrows Of God

It is an incontrovertible truth. God will ultimately settle His displeasure with the wicked. It is prophetic. No matter that the wicked are, even today, in great power. God will absolutely and finally vindicate His righteous of their enemies. They "bend their bows to shoot their arrows, ...That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, ...But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded."

Psalms 64:9-10 - "And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; ...The righteous shall be glad in the LORD."

Thou That Hearest Prayers, To Thee Shall All Flesh Come

David exalted God, pronouncing His worthiness of praise, and that men should keep their vows unto Him. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." He recognized the universality of sin, and how eminently important it is for all men to turn to God to have their transgressions purged. Nobody but our Great God can forgive and cleanse as He!

Psalms 65:4 - "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."

The Wealthy Place

"How terrible art thou in all thy works! ...Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men." Why does the psalmist call God "terrible"? Because His works are sometimes truly dreadful (as the parting of the Red Sea and delivering Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land). God's "terrible" acts refine men as silver in the fire, but produce priceless results.

Psalms 66:12 - "Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."

Futile Prayer

Some prayers are just useless. If we offend God by our sins and do not resolve the problem through proper repentance, the lines of communication are down. The Lord will not withhold blessings from someone in good

standing with Him, but "God is angry with the wicked every day," Psalm 7:11. It is a hard saying, but true. He essentially says, "The only prayer I want to hear right now is repentance." Fortunately, God quickly responds to true repentance.

Psalms 66:18 - "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

God Governs The Nations

Lest the world forget, David prayed that God's ways would be known upon the earth, and His saving health among all nations. We cannot prosper if we deny Him. "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. ...let all the people praise thee." God rules in the affairs of men. Worship Him!

Psalms 67:6 - "Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

God Setteth The Solitary In Families

The psalmist prayed, "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered, ...But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God." He is Father to the fatherless, a judge for widows, a deliverer for those in chains, and He prepares goodness for the poor. Either way you look at it, God aggregates people. He separates the wicked to their place, and gathers the righteous to their place. If you trust fully in Him, He will not leave you alone. He will send someone from the family of God to help you.

Psalms 68:6 - "God setteth the solitary in families."

Thou Hast Led Captivity Captive

Again and again, God has shown Himself to be the LORD of hosts - a mighty warrior. "When thou didst march through the wilderness; The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel. ...Kings of armies did flee." The psalmist waxed prophetic, speaking of Messiah's ultimate conquest. Following Calvary, Jesus delivered all the righteous souls of the Old Testament from death and the grave.

Psalms 68:18 - "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men."

Bless God

In this text, the word blessing means to kneel as in worship. Repeatedly, the psalmist says, "Blessed be the LORD, ...bless ye God in the congregations,Sing unto God, ...O sing praises unto the Lord, ...Blessed be God." He declared that even the enemies of God saw how "the singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were damsels playing with timbrels." When you go to pray, bless God. Sing, dance, kneel, worship, praise. Bless Him. Even kings must bless the Lord.

Psalms 68:29 - "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee."

God Will See You Through The Flood

Most of us have felt desperation like David's. "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. ...I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Sometimes enemies threaten us and we feel overwhelmed - like we are drowning. "Let me not sink!" Like Jesus in Gethsemane, praying for the cup of suffering to pass, we pray for grace to survive our suffocating trials. But trials are ordained. Noah survived his flood, and you can survive yours.

Psalms 69:15 - "Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up."

Prophecies Of Christ's Betrayal

Nineteen Messianic psalms contain 128 prophetic facts about Jesus Christ. They also contain 72 facts about the traitor, Judas Iscariot. Psalm 69 contains several of those facts. Of Judas, "Let their table become a snare before them, ...Let their habitation be desolate; ...Let them be blotted out of the book of the living," and more. Of Christ, "They hate me without a cause, ...They gave me gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

Psalms 69:20 - "Reproach hath broken my heart; ...I looked for some to take pity, ...but I found none."

Repetitious Prayers

Jesus said, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions." Saying forty "Our Fathers" or twenty "Hail, Marys" is vain repetition. Worthless. Yet repetitious prayer is perfectly in order. Five times in the Psalms, David asked God to "make haste" to help him. Twenty-six times he prayed, "Deliver me." Eight times he prayed "Let them be ashamed," over his enemies. Literally dozens of phrases are oft repeated throughout the book of Psalms. Every time you have a need, pray about it, even if it is the one-hundredth time.

Psalms 70:1 - "Make haste, O God, to deliver me."

David Promised To Praise God

David wrote 75 of the 150 Psalms. Fifty were anonymous. The rest were written by Asaph, Heman, Solomon, Ethan, and one from Moses. Twenty Psalms are prayers of distress. Each time David cried out to God for help, for salvation, for deliverance, for protection, he also promised to praise God for His blessings. Be careful to praise God for every answered prayer.

Psalms 71:22-24 - "I will also praise thee with the psaltery, ...unto thee will I sing with the harp, ...My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; ...My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness."

Shadows Versus Substance

Typology is the study of prefigurative symbols. Temporal, material things often reveal eternal, spiritual things. David wrote Psalm 72 "for Solomon," a prayer for his son-king. But it is mostly prophetic of the coming kingdom of Christ. Most of its context was NOT fulfilled in Solomon, lending evidence that it truly refers to Jesus.

Psalms 72:5,8,11,17 - "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, ...He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, ...all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him, ...His name shall endure for

ever."

It Is Good For Me To Draw Near To God

Asaph expressed his frustration with himself for envying the prosperity of the wicked and how they seemed to escape punishment. He felt that his attempts to live righteously had gone unrewarded. He reminded himself how proud, corrupt, violent and blasphemous they were. "Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction."

Psalms 73:28 - "It is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works."

Asaph, The Seer

Asaph, the choir and orchestra conductor and composer, wrote Psalm 50 and 73-83. Decades later, King Hezekiah called Asaph a seer (prophet). Asaph lamented great spiritual decline in Israel in Solomon's latter years. Asaph mourned the profaning of the sanctuary and heathen insurgencies throughout the land. "We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth how long." Asaph yearned for God to intervene.

Psalms 74:12,22 - "God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. ...Arise, O God, plead thine own cause."

God Promotes And Exalts Whom He Will

Who could have known better than King David that promotion comes from the LORD? God cuts off "the horns of the wicked," and exalts "the horns of the righteous." The ancients considered horns on beasts as symbols of their strength and power. So when God exalts or cuts off the horns, He is either strengthening or weakening men at His discretion.

Psalms 75:5-7 - "Lift not up your horn on high: ...For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."

God Is Notorious In Israel, Jerusalem And Zion

God is known, and His name is great in Israel. His tabernacle is in Salem (Jerusalem). His dwelling place is in (Mount) Zion. God broke His enemies' weapons there. They are spoiled and in a dead sleep. "Thou art to be feared." NEVER forget that God chose Israel for Himself. Not one enemy, ancient or modern, will ever take it away from Him.

Psalms 76:11 - "Let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared. He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth."

Remind Yourself Of God's Former Works Before You Pray

The psalmists often declared that God hears prayer. "I cried unto God with my voice, ...and he gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord." Then he reflected, "I call to remembrance my song in the night." Before making new requests, it is very beneficial to remember how many great things God has already done!

Psalms 77:10-12 - "I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. I will remember the works of the LORD: ...I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings."

The Ancient Signs From God Condemn Unbelief

Asaph enumerated many miraculous works of God for Israel: the plagues in Egypt, His dividing the Red Sea, leading them with a cloud by day, and fire by night, giving them water out of rocks, "angels' food" - manna from heaven, quail for meat, and ultimately, His law - His testimony. God's past works condemn our unbelief.

Psalms 78:32 - "For all this they sinned still, ...Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, ...When he slew them, then they sought him: ...and enquired early after God. ...And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer."

Pray During A Holocaust

The seventy-ninth Psalm is perhaps one of the most desperate prayers in the Bible. It mourns devastating losses in Jerusalem by the hands of heathen enemies. Even during a holocaust, prayer is more necessary than ever.

Psalms 79:1-3, 9 - "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven. ...Help us, O God of our salvation, ...deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake."

Messiah Will Save God's Vineyard

Asaph prayed while mourning God's fierce dealings with backsliding Israel. He reminded God how He "brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. ...and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land." "O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted." Then he prayed for Messiah to save His vineyard.

Psalms 80:17 - "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself."

A Law And A Statue To Worship God With Music

God grieves when His people fail to praise and worship Him, but He delights to hear their praises. Throughout the ages, His prophets have urged His people to sing loudly, make a joyful noise, play musical instruments, and declare His goodness. Why? For His mighty works in our behalf from ancient days.

Psalms 81:1-4 - "Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. ...bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet, ...For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob."

God Is Our Source Of Justice And True Judgment

Asaph said, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men." Asaph was correcting himself. We are no gods. At best, we are children of the Lord if we are born again of His spirit.

Only God can judge righteously among men. He exhorts us to judge justly among the poor, the fatherless, the afflicted and needy. But only as we appropriate the wisdom of God may we walk in righteous judgment.

Psalms 82:8 - "Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations."

Pray That Men May Know God Defends Israel

Asaph prayed to God, "hold not thy peace, and be not still." "Thine enemies make a tumult: ...They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, ...They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." Even now, as in ancient times, God alone will save Israel.

Psalms 83:17-18 - "Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth."

God Is A Blessor

Look at God's track record! He blessed Adam with a garden paradise. He blessed Noah with an escape route from the flood. He blessed Lot, sending angels to deliver him from Sodom. He blessed Joseph with dominion over Egypt. He blessed fleeing Israel with sensational miracles. He sent miraculous food, miraculous water, even miraculous shoes! There is no need God cannot provide. Stop thinking God cannot or will not bless you, too!

Psalms 84:11 - "...the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Revival

One of the greatest principles in the Bible is revival. Since creation's dawn, God was the giver of life. Not only can God create and give life, but He has the power to resurrect that which has died. Throughout the scriptures we see examples of God raising the dead. Ezekiel saw Israel as a valley of dried bones, but the Spirit of God came on them and they revived. Destroyed in 70 AD, Israel revived in 1948. I believe in divine revivals.

Psalms 85:6 - "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

There Is Only One God, And All Nations Will Worship Him

In the midst of one of David's earnest prayers for God's help, he made several profound declarations concerning God. "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name." Two eternal truths are affirmed here: God is the only God, and all nations will finally worship Him. No power on earth can change that.

Psalms 86:10 - "For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone."

The Foundation Of God Is In Zion

The world wonders how the Middle East crisis will ever be resolved. Powerful

men from powerful nations exhaust themselves daily, looking for ways to settle "the Jerusalem issue." Who will ultimately control Jerusalem? God will. He set Israel above all nations, and Jerusalem above all cities. The psalmist reveals that when He (Messiah) comes to reign, multitudes will wish they were born there.

Psalms 87: 1-3 - "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

Pray Like A Dying Man

People pray differently when they think they are dying. Our prayers are often too light-hearted; our intercessions fail to manifest urgency. But when we think we are dying, that changes. In the 1600s, a preacher named Richard Baxter was transformed by a series of grave illnesses. "As a dying man, my soul was the more brought to seriousness, and to preach as a dying man to dying men."

Psalms 88:2-3 - "Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry; For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave."

God's Covenant With David

God promised David, "Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." Messiah will soon come and revive the throne of David. "His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. ...If his children forsake my law, ...Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, ...Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him."

Psalms 89:34-36 - "My covenant will I not break, ...I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."

The Days Of Our Years Are Three-Score-And-Ten

Moses was 120 when he died. But in Moses' prayer (Psalm 90), the old prophet magnified God for being "our dwelling place in all generations. ...from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." As God is timeless, things on earth are increasingly short-lived - especially man. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

Psalms 90:12 - "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

God's Angels Will Bear You Up

What is it like in God's "secret place"? His shadow and "wings" cover you. He is your refuge and fortress. He delivers you from snares and pestilence. His shield protects you. Night terrors and flying arrows do not frighten you. When the LORD is your habitation, destruction comes to others, but "there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

Psalms 91:11 - "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Set Your Love Upon Him

How often do you encounter someone who has genuine affection for God? There is no more important reason for living than to give joy and pleasure to our Creator. We were created by Him, but also FOR His pleasure. He is thrilled to see us loving, worshipping, serving, even singing to Him. He promised to provide His choicest favors to those who live to please Him. Who on earth can compete with that offer?

Psalms 91:14 - "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high."

The Righteous Shall Flourish. The Wicked Shall Perish.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto His name. Sing praises to Him for His lovingkindness with stringed instruments. Brutish men or fools cannot know or understand this. The wicked "shall be destroyed forever, ...shall perish, ...shall be scattered." The righteous shall flourish like palm trees and cedars. This simple truth is nevertheless profound.

Psalms 92:13-14 - "Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing."

Holiness Becometh God's House

The LORD is "clothed with majesty; ...with strength." His throne is established of old. He established the world. He is from everlasting. He is mightier than all the floods and waves of the sea. Of who else in the universe can these things be said? Who is great like the LORD? Everything His word declares about Him is forever settled. If anything anywhere is holy, it is God and His house. We should keep the LORD's house sanctified and never profane it.

Psalms 93:5 - "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever."

The LORD Will Not Cast Off His People

There is prophecy in the statement, "The LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance." Despite everything we could say about the righteous flourishing and wicked perishing, God has made covenants with Israel. After centuries of apostasy, still God has never totally written them off. At the end of this age, Jesus will come and save Israel. That is the priceless, unimaginable benefit of covenant with God who cannot lie.

Psalms 94:14-15 - "For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. But judgment shall return unto righteousness."

Harden Not Your Heart

This Psalm admonishes us to "make a joyful noise" to the LORD; ...sing unto the LORD; ...come ...with thanksgiving; ...worship; ...bow down, ...kneel before the LORD our maker; ...For he is our God." Then, a sudden warning: Do not provoke Me as Israel did, by hardening your hearts. I will ban you from entering into My rest. If you fail to worship God as He so richly deserves, you offend Him greatly. It is grim folly to disdain your Creator.

Psalms 95:7-8 - "To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation."

He Cometh To Judge The Earth

Throughout the Psalms, we are admonished countless times to sing and worship and praise God for all His wonders. "For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens." In addition to praising God, we are commanded to instruct the heathen that God reigns over all. "Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth."

Psalms 96:13 - "For he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."

Light Is Sown For The Righteous

The LORD reigns majestically. Clouds and darkness obscure Him. Righteousness and judgment fill His throne. Fires consume His enemies. The wonders of nature - lightnings, earthquakes, volcanos - testify to His glories. Those who serve idols and images must someday worship Him. God's people, (i.e., Zion, daughters of Judah, all His saints) will be preserved and delivered from those wicked. For those who WANT to see, God shines light, revealing His glories. All others are blinded and darkened.

Psalms 97:11 - "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous."

The Right Hand Of God

No man has seen God, except allegorically in dreams or visions. The eternal Spirit dwells "in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see," 1 Timothy 6:16. Jesus, the fullness of God bodily, dwells at the right hand of the Majesty and is the arm, even the face of God. God reaches down to man through His Son - the man, Jesus Christ.

Psalms 98:1 - "O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

He Sitteth Between The Cherubims

God was literally present in Jerusalem. The psalmist said, "He sitteth between the cherubims," which were the golden angels on the mercy seat atop the ark of the covenant. "The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people." Isaiah described that scene years later when he saw the LORD high and lifted up and His train filled the Temple. God was in the Temple, sitting above the ark, on His holy hill - Mount Moriah.

Psalms 99:9 - "Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy."

Make A Joyful Noise Unto The LORD

This psalm needs no commentary. Just do what it says! "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his

pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

Psalms 100:5 - "For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

I Will Do Right

Emulate righteous men. King David lived by principles. "I will sing of mercy and judgment unto thee, O LORD. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. I will not know a wicked person. I will cut off slanderers. I will not suffer a high look and a proud heart. I will cut off wicked doers." What will YOU do?

Psalms 101:3 - "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside."

The LORD Shall Appear In His Glory In Zion

God's chosen people of Israel have suffered countless holocausts and genocide attempts for centuries. But God promised to return them to Jerusalem and rebuild Zion. No one will ever destroy Israel. Jesus will soon come and crush all their enemies at Armageddon.

Psalms 102:13, 15-16 - "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. ...So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."

God Created His Throne

One of the many things God created is His own throne. The psalmist said, "The LORD hath prepared His throne in the heavens." "Prepared" in Hebrew means "set up, erected." God was a lone spirit in a void universe. Eventually, He created the foursquare city of heaven, and built a throne for Himself. Even in His throne, He was invisible, because He is a spirit, and dwells in the light whom no man hath seen, nor can see. He was an infinite spirit before He had a throne.

Psalms 103:19 - "The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens."

Exalt His Majesty

The psalmist waxed eloquent, attempting to paint a word-picture of God's majesty. "He is clothed with light as a garment. He stretches out the heavens like a curtain. He lays the beams of His chambers in the waters. He makes the clouds His chariots. He walks on the wings of the wind. He makes His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire." God's majesty (grandeur, sovereignty, power and authority) far exceeds all allegories.

Psalms 104:24 - "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

God Remembers His Covenants Forever

The fulfilled prophecies and covenants of God - His mighty works in behalf of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, the plagues of Egypt and the miracles in the wilderness, and more - are endless reminders that our God

never fails.

Psalms 105:8 - "He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance."

Never Make Excuses For The Miracles Of The Bible

Skeptics argue against the miraculous parting of the Red Sea, saying the Israelites crossed the "Sea of Reeds" in a dried shallow area at low tide. How then did Pharaoh's army drown in a shallow marsh when the tide came back? If Israel even reached the Red Sea, that argues that other miracles had already occurred - the burning bush, the rod and snake, the leprosy, dreadful plagues on Egypt, and more. The Bible is unequivocally true. Only skeptics will be disproven - not God.

Psalms 106:11 - "And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left."

Dark Trials Inspire Us To Pray

People who "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron, ...cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses." Again, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. ...they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, ...he bringeth them unto their desired haven." Affliction compels men to search out God.

Psalms 107:20 - "He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

He Shall Tread Down His Enemies

The verses of Psalm 108 are copied from Psalms 57 and 60. It is not uncommon for content to be repeated in the Bible. Many stories of the chronicles of the kings were told twice. The gospels tell the story of Jesus four times. Why the repetition? Repetition is an unrivaled teaching method. So why is this psalm repeated? It emphatically reminds us that God is exceedingly worthy to be praised, and does as He pleases over the cities of men.

Psalms 108:13 - "Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies."

Adversaries and Prayer

The best way to deal with your enemies is to go to prayer first of all. It is a dangerous thing to tangle with your enemies before presenting the situation to God. A cool head, a quiet tongue and an earnest prayer is a better strategy than a carnally-minded confrontation that will almost certainly produce bad results. Pray for those who spitefully use you. Let God work on the situation before you make a big mess of it.

Psalms 109:4 - "For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer."

Melchizedek

Abraham warred against (Iraq) and (Iran) to avenge their siege on Lot and the city of Sodom. He recovered people and possessions. Melchizedek brought bread, wine and blessings for Abraham, who gave him tithes of everything recovered. This Melchizedek, "king of Salem, priest of the most high God," was not Christ, but a type. Both were king and priest of Jeru-salem. Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine portended Jesus' offering body and blood at Calvary.

Psalms 110:4 - "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

God Performs His Covenant

The works of the LORD are great, honorable, glorious and memorable. He gives meat to those who fear him. He never forgets His covenant. He shows His powerful works to give His people their promised heritage, and He does so in truth and uprightness. He redeems His people, and keeps His covenant. Holy and reverend is His name. We should both fear and praise a great God like that. "Praise ye the LORD."

Psalms 111:10 - "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments."

The Righteous Man

The righteous man fears God and obeys His commandments. He is gracious, compassionate, giving, and discreet. His heart is fixed - established. He is not afraid of bad news because He trusts in the LORD. He lives to see his desire over his enemies. His generation is blessed by God and his righteousness endures forever. In contrast, the wicked grieve and gnash their teeth at the sight of the righteous. They will melt away, and not see their desires.

Psalms 112:1 - "Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments."

The Name Of The LORD Is To Be Praised

Hundreds of times, the scriptures urge us to praise the LORD. And the reasons are endless. "The LORD is high above all nations. ...He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That he may set him with princes, ...He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD." Jesus - Jehovah Incarnate - deserves all praise.

Psalms 113:3 - "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised."

The Presence Of The LORD

The presence of God was so awesome in the midst of Israel as they were escaping from Egypt, the psalmist declared, "The sea saw it, and fled. The mountains skipped like rams." If God's presence could turn back the floodwaters, and make the earth quake, just imagine what the presence of the LORD will do in your life!

Psalms 114:7 - "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob; Which turned the rock into a standing water,

the flint into a fountain of waters."

Idols Are Nothing

The idols of the heathen are silver and gold - the work of men's hands. They have mouths that cannot speak, eyes that cannot see, ears that cannot hear, noses that cannot smell, hands that cannot hold anything, and feet that cannot go anywhere. The people who make such absurdities, or put their trust in them, are like them. Worship the one, true, living God!

Psalms 115:3,11 - "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. ...Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield."

Pray For Comfort In The Face Of Death

Shortly before my wife died of cancer at 51, I found Psalm 116 underlined in her childhood Bible. As a teen-ager, she experienced a dread of dying and these verses comforted her. "I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice ...sorrows of death compassed me... Then called I upon the name of the LORD... thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." Whether we live or die, we are the LORD's.

Psalms 116:15 - "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."

Praise The LORD

Psalm 117 has the distinction of being both the shortest chapter in the Bible AND the middle chapter in the King James Version. There are 594 chapters BEFORE and 594 chapters AFTER Psalm 117. Remember, the original texts had no chapter or verse divisions for hundreds of years. Nevertheless, the message of Psalm 117 is an appropriate centerpiece to the entire Bible.

Psalms 117:1-2 - "O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD."

The Rejected Stone Becomes The Corner Stone

This great Messianic psalm is about trusting the LORD. It speaks of "this gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter," which certainly pertains to Christ. Then he says thou "art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." Prophetic destiny overrules the will of men.

Psalms 118:24,26 - "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. ...Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD."

Adversity

A seafood purveyor noticed that live fish stored in tanks for long periods ended up being tough and tasteless when finally eaten. What was wrong? They became too sedate, lazy, inactive. His remedy? He put a small shark in the tank. It livened up the fish and made them active again. They proved to be delicious when finally served to diners. The moral? Adversity is good for us. The sharks in our lives make us more active, stronger and healthier.

Psalms 119:67 - "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."

The Entrance Of Thy Words Giveth Light

Humans cannot see in total darkness. Light is essential to sight. The 119th Psalm declares again and again that keeping the commandments and precepts of God gives understanding and light. The Old Testament prophets were called seers - enlightened because of the word of God in their souls. "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts," Psalms 119:99-100. Want to know the future? Read the Word!

Psalms 119:130 - "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Order My Steps In Thy Word

The 119th Psalm is divided into sections of eight verses each, headed by each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Some call it the "Psalm of the Word of God" because it very repetitiously emphasizes the blessings of observing and obeying the word of God. Its key phrases are very synonymous. Walk in the law. Keep His testimonies. Keep His precepts. Keep His statutes. Respect His commandments. Learn His righteous judgments. Delight in His statutes. Keep His word. We should be so repetitious, to observe His word all day long, every day.

Psalms 119:133 - "Order my steps in thy word."

The Home Of The Antichrist

Augustine Calmet, who published a groundbreaking Bible commentary in 1707, said, "Meshech was apparently the father of the Mosquians (Islamists), who dwelt in the mountains that separate Iberia from Armenia, and both from Colchis (modern Georgia and Eastern Turkey). This priceless clue identifies Meshech of Ezekiel 38. The warrior who will attack Israel and be defeated by Jesus Christ at Armageddon (Antichrist) will come from Meshech."

Psalms 120:5-7 - "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Meshech, ...My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war."

Divine Protection 24/7

The eternal spirit of God is forever conscious. He is wide-awake, aware, in-touch, on-the-job. If we could comprehend the awesome magnitude of His omnipotence and omniscience, we would never doubt His ability to care for us in infinite detail. He knows the number of hairs on our head, and He discerns not only our thoughts, but our intentions. From the farthest reaches of the universe, to the infinite depths of our heart and soul, God is aware of it all.

Psalms 121:3 - "...he that keepeth thee will not slumber."

Pray For The Peace Of Jerusalem

David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." The tribes of

Israel assembled before the Ark to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. Jerusalem is hallowed to God and His saints. He dwelled in the Temple in ancient times, and will soon return to build a new temple there.

Psalms 122:6,9 - "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. ...Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good."

I Lift Up My Eyes Unto The LORD

Every man and woman has need of the mercy of God to face the many adversaries and adversities of life, and we need God's help to endure the contempt, scorn and pride of those who vex our souls. Look up to heaven and call on the LORD.

Psalms 123:2-3 - "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O LORD."

If It Had Not Been The LORD Who Was On Our Side

If God had not fought for us against our enemies, they would have consumed us. "Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: ...Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

Psalms 124:2-3 - "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us."

The Mountains Round About Jerusalem

Permanence. "They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed." The mountains of Jerusalem will never remove as long as time shall be. Neither shall the goodness of God remove from those that are good and upright in heart. Those that do iniquity, however, "turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth." God will remove them. Mentioned 154 times, Zion is God's favorite place on earth.

Psalms 125:2 - "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever."

They That Sow In Tears Shall Reap In Joy

"Am I dreaming?" That must have been the thoughts of thousands of Jews returning to Zion from seventy years of captivity in Babylon. They were laughing and singing, and their enemies were saying, "The LORD has done great things for them!" If you have suffered exile or hardships due to past sins, you will make a glorious comeback if you will keep the faith and do righteousness.

Psalms 126:5-6 - "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Except The LORD Build The House...

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." God forbid David to build a temple, but ordained Solomon. Prophetically speaking, you must realize that personal ambitions cannot build the kingdom of God. You must be led by His Spirit.

Psalms 127:1-2 - "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

Children

Children are a God-given heritage. The fruit of the womb is His reward. Children are like arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so the more, the merrier. Those who fear the LORD and walk in His ways will eat of the labor of his hands, in happiness and wellness. His wife will be fruitful and his children well-nurtured.

Psalms 128:5-6 - "The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel."

They That Hate Zion Will Be Confounded

We live in a world boiling over with Zion-bashers and Zion-haters. Hundreds of millions of people crave to see Israel annihilated, and Jerusalem totally controlled by non-Jews. It is an ancient syndrome. The psalmist reflected on the enemies of Zion. He said, "Let them be as grass that grows on housetops. It withers before it is full-grown. It can never be mown or bound in sheaves." Certainly, God will fulfill this ancient wish, and sooner than you may think.

Psalms 129:5 - "Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion."

Songs Of Degrees

Fifteen of the psalms (120-134) are called "A Song of degrees." They are synonymously called "Songs of Ascent," "Gradual Psalms," "Songs of Steps," or "Pilgrim Songs." They were traditionally recited as the Jews ascended the steps to the Temple Mount when they came, three times each year, to worship. The kohanim, or priests, also recited them regularly in the course of ministry in the Temple.

Psalms 130:1-2 - "(A Song of degrees.) Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications."

Peaceful As A Weaned Child

David wrote this song of degrees, stating, "LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child." The gist of this statement is, "I have learned to be humble, peacefully quiet, and patient, and have overcome separation anxiety, knowing that I always have hope in the LORD."

Psalms 131:3 - "Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever."

The Key Of David

"The key of David" was his supernatural understanding of prophetic destiny: Messiah enthroned in His Temple on Zion. "I will not give sleep to mine eyes, ...Until I find out a place for the LORD." "We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool. Arise, O LORD, into thy rest." "The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; ...Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

Psalms 132:13-14 - "The LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

Unity - The Blessing Of Life

Imagine Aaron standing in the door of the tabernacle in a glorious priestly robe, wearing mitre and crown, waiting to be consecrated as Israel's High Priest. Moses lifted the vessel of holy anointing oil and poured it on Aaron's head until it flowed down his beard onto the skirt of his garment. When brethren dwell together in unity, that blessing is simulated. Unity is like dew anointing Mount Herman or the mountains of Zion. "There the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

Psalms 133:1 - "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Lift Up Your Hands In The Sanctuary

This "Song of degrees" instructs the servants who stand by night in the house of the LORD to "lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD." Psalm 28 specifies lifting up hands toward the holy oracle (the Ark of the Covenant). The next time you go to church, be sure to lift your hands and bless the LORD. He deserves your worship.

Psalms 134:1 - "Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD."

Vapors, Lightnings, Winds, Tokens and Wonders

Although many of the psalms seem repetitious in their content, we need those repeated reminders to praise and bless the LORD. Everything in heaven and earth abundantly proves that He is worthy of our praise. Do not overlook the divinely majestic wonders, even in everyday thunderstorms, or forget the mighty works of God down through the ages. Praise Him!

Psalms 135:7,9 - "He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures. ...Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee."

Give Thanks, For His Mercy Endureth For Ever

One of the most oft-repeated phrases in the Bible is "for His mercy endureth for ever." It is a core reason why men should praise the LORD. That phrase was sung repeatedly on the day that King David brought up the Ark of the Covenant to the Tabernacle of David. It was sung the day Solomon dedicated the First Temple. Jeremiah (33:11) prophesies that those who say "his mercy endureth for ever" will be among those who will return to Jerusalem.

Psalms 136:26 - "O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy

endureth for ever."

Sin Will Steal Your Song

God punished the Jews for their unrepentant sins. As captives along the rivers of Babylon, they hung their harps on willow trees and wept. Babylonians ordered them to sing the songs of Zion, but they could not. "How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?" Babylon will steal your song and leave you begging for Jerusalem.

Psalms 137:5 - "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

All The Kings Of The Earth Shall Praise Thee

In Acts 2:29-30, Peter preached that the patriarch David was a prophet. David foresaw Messiah on earth as the King of Kings, ruling over all the earth. That is why, in his day, David praised God above all the gods on earth. "Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee. I will worship toward thy holy temple."

Psalms 138:4-5 - "All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD."

Man Evolved?

Just what did man evolve from, if the evolutionists can say? Almost seven billion humans overrun this planet. Where is one "evolving one," a halfway-there one? There should be at least a few million of them if the theory has truth in it. But it doesn't. It takes infinitely more "faith" to believe we happened by accident than to believe God made it all. So who's the fool?

Psalms 139:14 - "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."

The Evil Man

David prayed, "Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man." He is violent, imagines mischief in his heart, ready for war, sharpens his tongue like a serpent, has poison under his lips, purposes to overthrow me, hides a snare for me, and spreads a net by the wayside. God will destroy him.

Psalms 140:8 - "Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; ...let the mischief of their own lips cover them. Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again."

Prevent Me From Doing Evil

This is not an unreasonable prayer: "LORD, prevent me from doing evil." David prayed such a prayer. He asked God to set a watch - a guard - over his mouth, to stop his lips from saying evil. He asked God to prevent his heart from evil, or from collaborating, or even associating with evil men. Then he invited God to use righteous men to correct him when he needed reproof.

Psalms 141:5 - "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head."

Thou Art My Refuge - My Safe Hiding Place

The 142nd Psalm was written while David was hiding in a cave from the evil hand of King Saul. "I cried unto the LORD. ...I showed him my trouble." It was terrifying for the young man to contemplate that the King of Israel was pursuing him with armies, threatening to kill him. "They privily laid a snare for me, ...REFUGE failed me; no man cared for my soul." David was panic-stricken. But God was his refuge. Even now, God is our safe hiding place.

Psalms 142:5 - "I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge."

Deliver Me From Mine Enemies

Your enemies may get you down, but you can still call on the LORD. David did. He said, "The enemy hath persecuted my soul. ...He hath smitten my life down to the ground. ...He hath made me to dwell in darkness. ...My spirit is overwhelmed within me. ...My heart within me is desolate. ...I flee unto thee to hide me." Your enemies cannot escape when God intervenes.

Psalms 143:9,12 - "Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies. ...And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant."

Strange Children

David blessed the LORD for teaching his hands to war; for subduing his people under him; for being his fortress, high tower, deliverer and shield. Twice, he asked God to deliver him "from the hand of strange children. Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." Simultaneously, he blessed Israel. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones." Strange children - vain liars - enemies - will be banished. True sons of God will be blessed.

Psalms 144:11 - "Deliver me from the hand of strange children."

Meat In Due Season

All his life, David never ceased praising God for everything he could think of - a practically endless list. He knew that we all depend upon God for everything we have. "The eyes of all wait upon thee." "Due season" infers a prophetic certainty that He will always meet our needs according to His riches in glory. In due season, all the blessings and purposes of God will be fulfilled.

Psalms 145:15 - "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

Don't Trust In Men - Trust In God

Here is an admonition NOT to trust in princes, or ordinary men, in whom there is no help. Men stop breathing and are buried in the earth. Look at God's record: He made heaven, earth, the sea, and everything in it. He keeps truth forever, executes judgment for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry, loosens prisoners, opens the eyes of the blind, raise up those who are bowed down, and more and more.

Psalms 146:5 - "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God."

He Hath Not Dealt So With Any Nation

"The LORD doth build up Jerusalem. He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. ...He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. He makes peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. ...He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel." No nation in history has been so profoundly blessed of God as Israel.

Psalms 147:12 - "Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. ...He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them."

All Creation Praises God

The psalmist called on all creation to praise the LORD. "Praise ye him, all his angels: ...all his hosts, ...sun and moon, ...all ye stars of light, ...heaven of heavens, ...waters above the heavens, ...earth, ...fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind, ...mountains, and all hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl, ...kings of the earth, and all people, ...young men, maidens, old men and children."

Psalms 148:13 - "Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven."

New Songs

Traditional hymns and songs of worship are at the very core of Christian worship. But all these songs were once new and innovative. We liked them when we first heard them, and we have continued to use them for many years. But it is just as important to continue writing new songs of worship - songs that are fresh and perhaps even spontaneous. We should welcome the introduction of new songs into our worship experience.

Psalms 149:1 - "Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints."

Praise Him In The Dance

Miriam led the people in a celebratory dance after God took them miraculously through the Red Sea. When the LORD gave Jephthah victory over the Ammonites, his daughter danced to celebrate. The women of Israel danced when David defeated the Philistines. David danced before the LORD to celebrate the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant. We should dance to celebrate God's wonderful works in our behalf.

Psalms 149:3 - "Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. Psalms 150:4 Praise him with the timbrel and dance."

Praise Him With Musical Instruments

Banning musical instruments in worship contradicts several biblical mandates. Music expresses worship from the soul - not just the music that comes from our mouths, but from our hands on musical instruments. It is as biblical as anything. Psalm 150 says to PRAISE HIM with trumpets,

psalteries (guitars), harps, timbrels, stringed instruments, organs, loud cymbals, and high sounding cymbal. The music is not intended for your pleasure or your entertainment. It is for HIS pleasure and HIS entertainment. He loves it loud, energetic and boisterous!

Psalms 150:6 - "Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD."

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