

### **Thursday, April 15, 2021—Psalms 13-15**

Tea kettles begin to whistle as the water boils and the steam makes its way out of the vessel. Likewise, people find relief when they can “vent” their frustrations to a trusted ear. Sometimes it’s sad. Sometimes, a song.

David wanted answers from God. “How long will you forget me, Lord? How long will I wrestle with these emotions and deal with these difficult people?” He expressed his desperation to God and his desire to overcome the attacks. Then, after the pressure was released, he remembered. He trusted Him. God had been good, so he sang. Like the kettle announcing the water is ready, David would sing of God’s love.

Some face similar struggles or taste the sinister sweetness of sin and decide God is not worth praising. He does not deserve obedience. He becomes the fool who says there is no God (14:1). There is no one who is righteous, so every person is prone to wander. Those who repent and walk in righteousness will face difficulty from the unrighteous, but God is a refuge for those who trust in Him (14:6). He will restore the faithful.

These faithful people will never be shaken (15:5). They grow in godliness and trust God increasingly. Their lives demonstrate His holiness, and they deal with others in grace and mercy. They sacrifice self for the benefit of others (15:4). They become God’s walking representatives.

Praise God for the gift of knowing Him and the responsibility of serving Him. Thank Him for the ability to vent the frustrations of life and to sing of His faithfulness through it all.

### **Wednesday, April 14, 2021—Psalms 10-12**

In some relationships, one member will not express the full range of emotions or be completely candid for fear of scaring the person away or weakening the friendship. The beauty of the Psalms is the width and depth of the emotions on display. The writer was an open book before God.

“Why are you so far off when things are so bad here?” Psalm 10:1 wants God to explain where He is when life is hard. There is no tip-toeing around the issue. This is frank, hard discussion about real life, and God is not scared off or offended. God would be bothered if these questions were asked about Him instead of to Him. He welcomes the approach of His people and the feelings they experience. He listens (10:17) and answers.

The Psalmist knows the thoughts and actions of the wicked are violations of God’s holiness. Rather than taking matters into his own hands, he asks God to strike the wicked and punish them (10:14). God remains his source of hope when injustice and suffering are before him.

Psalms 11 and 12 are an anchor for the righteous. God is in control. Despite the direction of the world, He remains sovereign. He loves righteousness and sees the righteous. He will punish the wicked (11:6). He will rescue the needy (12:5). His faithful ones can trust in Him.

Praise God for being real and being willing to listen to His people. Pour out your frustration and desires for justice and mercy. Pray that He makes you a vessel who delivers truth and hope to the world.

## **Tuesday, April 13, 2021—Psalms 7-9**

Honesty is the best policy. Being honest allows one to tell things as are. One doesn't need to remember what lies he has told to keep from being exposed or having to tell more lies. Being honest, however, is risky because, in being honest, one will be required to admit mistakes.

David was transparent before Yahweh. He declared his complete trust in Him and his need for protection and deliverance. He asked that God would save him, but he then asked God to allow his attackers to have success if he were guilty of sin (7:3-5). That is honesty. That is vulnerability.

David knew God was the ultimate judge. David knew God was completely righteous and trustworthy. He was fully at peace putting himself in the care of God and allowing Him to sort out what would come. This is why he gladly declared, "How excellent is your name in all the earth!" (8:1). When he thought about the power of God to create everything in its beauty and intricacy, David was astonished that this God was willing to make Himself known to man and had given man His purpose.

When David was honest, he grew to revere God more and be humbled before Him. He will not forsake those who seek Him (9:10). He will, in time, rescue the lowly and punish the wicked. He is worthy of praise and self-reflection. He is good, and He will judge everyone correctly.

Tell God He is good. Be honest and humble before Him.

## **Monday, April 12, 2021—Psalms 4-6**

In The New City Catechism, question one asks, "What is our only hope in life and death?" The answer is that we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ. Knowing we belong to Him means we can rest in any and every situation because He is the ultimate judge, provider, and protector.

This peace is not possible with earthly idols and self-sufficiency. The Psalmist celebrated his hope in God in Psalm 4. God listens when he prays. The world pursues other goals and worships other gods, but he offers to God the sacrifices of righteousness and trusts in Him. He can lie down and sleep in peace because God gives Him safety (4:8). He knows God will work all things out, so he trusts in Him, not self or others.

This hope is based on the character of God. The Psalmist cries out to God to listen and to respond, but he admits the multitude of God's mercies is the only avenue for approaching Him (5:7). He pleads with God to destroy his enemies in their sinful pursuits and to defend those who trust in Him. The favor of God is a shield around those who trust Him (5:12).

In the depth of despair, the song writer called out for God's deliverance. He wanted to survive so he could continue praising God. After all, no one praises God from the grave (6:5). Praise God for His steadfast love and His new mercies every morning.

## **Sunday, April 11, 2021—Psalms 1-3**

King David was an extraordinary man from ordinary beginnings. His time tending sheep had prepared him to shepherd the people of Israel and defend them against their enemies. That time in the fields also gave him an appreciation for music, and he contributed heavily to the book of praises that Israel compiled for their times of worship.

The song book begins with a celebration of the life-changing Law of God. The man who delights in the Law and meditates on it day and night finds the only source of stability and fruitfulness. In contrast, the ungodly will find themselves crushed by the standards of that same Law on the day of judgment. God sees the righteous and unrighteous.

The second psalm was a coronation hymn. On the day they crowned a new king, the people recognized the desire of surrounding nations to crush God's people and displace God from His throne, yet God laughed at their plans (2:4). He does what pleases Him, so man is wise to accept His sovereignty and align with His leader.

The Law is good, and God is in control, but Psalm 3 admits life is not always easy. The world disparages God, but the song writer knows God listens and is faithful. Salvation belongs to Him, and He takes away fear.

In Him and Him alone is real life and abundance. Thank God for His truth for living and the hope and stability it brings. Pray for endurance in the hard days and within the storms of doubt and attack.

### **Saturday, April 10, 2021—2 Samuel 22-24**

A relationship with God does not guarantee an easy life. This was never God's promise, and it was not Jesus' example. A relationship with God is a guarantee for difficulty as one lives for His glory and His Kingdom in a world that opposes Him. A relationship with God is a promise of His presence, power, and peace when the storms are raging.

David was God's anointed leader, and he had great success. His military might was unmistakable, and the people of the nation adored him, but he faced great difficulty along the way. He faced fear. He drew near to death. He felt deep sorrow, but God was his rock, fortress, and deliverer (22:2). He sensed God's delight in him (22:20) as he walked in His ways (22:22). He was faithful to God, and God was faithful to him.

David was not alone in his journey with God. The Lord raised up mighty men to assist David in his leading Israel. These men were willing to lay down their lives for David (23:16), and David gave thanks to God and worshiped Him for putting such honorable men in his life.

Any good gift can become an object of worship rather than an avenue to worship. David wanted to count the number of fighting men, but God knew this would lead him to trust the strength of his soldiers more than he trusted God Himself, so God disciplined David and his people because of David's pride. A leader affects his people and himself.

Thank God for His presence and the godly people in your life.

### **Friday, April 9, 2021—2 Samuel 19-21**

Once, when Jesus conversed with a lame man, He asked, "Do you want to get well?" Who wouldn't want to get well? This man had been unable to walk for nearly 40 years. Why would Jesus ask that? It's likely Jesus wanted the man to assess his heart and mind. Was he ready to leave behind a condition that defined him? As inconvenient as his handicap was, he had learned to deal with it. Was he ready for a new life and identity?

David was king once again. The threat to his throne was gone. His people were celebrating victory, but David was mourning his son's death. While he should have been

thanking his troops and praising God, David was devastated. Joab called David to accountability. He was once again the king of Israel. He needed to act accordingly. He was not dismissing David's grief, but he was calling him to the role God had given him. Mourning appeared to be love for his enemies and disdain for his defenders.

David listened to Joab and acted regally—offering gratitude and grace as needed and then putting down rebellion. He made difficult decisions to make right what had gone wrong, and he defended his people from outside attack. Proverbs 27:1 says the rebuke of a friend can be trusted. David's friend helped realign his life with God's calling.

Pray for friends who hold you accountable to live in holiness. Pray that you will be a friend who has hard conversations for God's glory.