
QT Questions—for Psalms

(Here's a short introduction to the book of Psalms from my Study Bibles.)

- The book of Psalms includes 150 poetic compositions meant to be sung or spoken by God's people. The psalms are directed at God as listener and are intended to express the full range of human emotion for various individual and group settings, such as praise, thanksgiving, petition and lament. Psalms was Israel's book of worship and is meant to guide God's people from generation to generation. The psalms' language is open-ended, reflecting their intended ongoing use in the community—in worship gatherings, coronations, festivals and as individual prayers.

Ps 1 (11/17/23)

1. What are the dos and don'ts of blessing; what are the results of obedience and disobediences; how is the Lord involved in all these; what do you desire to do and not do along with this psalm?
 - The blessings God showers His people opens by telling us "what not to do." In our Christian faith, the yes and no, what to do and what not to do, are important, because they are the expressions and reflections of our obedience because of our trust in our God's words and ways. I heard a pastor say that he teaches the Ten Commandments in all positive commands because he does not like to use the negative expressions. While it is true that most of us like the positives over the negatives, I am of the belief, if God used the negative expressions, then it's best to follow His ways over mine. So, I am thinking, why did God open this blessing with a negative? My thought is because we are so prone to do what we shouldn't, as Paul would confess, which I see it in my life, "the good I want to do I don't, and the bad I don't want to do, I do." Knowing what we are prone to, our God wisely and lovingly tells us, don't walk, don't sit, and don't stand with the wicked in their wickedness. Say no to the sinful ways all around us, including in my heart, so that I will not join the sins that are always tugging us to come in. May we drink abundantly of God's grace, so that we will be able to humbly say "No" to our sins' tugging, and lovingly say "Yes" to learning and meditating and obeying God's word in our lives. You know, the more we experience His love, the more we will love Him, and the more joyfully we will obey the One we love.

Ps 2 (11/18/23)

1. What are the kings and leaders of the world wishing to do and why; what do you learn about the world through them and can you see that today; what is God's response to them and why; how does God want the people to live?
 - In v. 2, the kings of the world are against the Lord and against His anointed. When the world is against God's people, it amounts to opposing God Himself. It is when a son is attacked, his father will also fight with his son. This is God's way; He fights with and for His children. We know, in our fight, our enemies can be much mightier than we are. So, on our own, defeat is our outcome. When our lives is our own, then in our own strength we live and fight. When we love being independent, then independently we must fight and suffer our loss. When God's people forget that we are children, children of our Father, who is the King of all kings, then, we live and fight as if we were powerless and hopeless people. But, when we learn and remember that that our Father is the Almighty God, then who is more powerful than our Father? None, absolutely, no one. He who is in us is greater than the one in the world (1Jn

4:4). And so, just as the Father laughs at the kings who are conspiring against Him, so we also can smile and know, no matter how great and many the enemies (our troubles, struggles, difficulties, adversaries, laws, and even situations) might be, with our Father, we also will stand in victory, because our Father is mightier than anyone or anything.

Ps 3 (11/20/23)

1. When was this psalm written (2Sam 15-18) and how would David be; what are the significances of “a shield” and “lifts my head high” and “lie down and sleep”; despite his situation, what is David’s expectation and why would he feel that; what do you learn?

- Though David begins this psalm under a most difficult and painful situation, in verse 3, the first words that contradicts, fights and triumphs over his misery are “But You, Lord.” It is not in the changing of the situation that David sees his tragedy overturning, but it is found in You, Lord. As we often say, the presence of trouble is not our greatest trouble, but it is the absence of Christ in the midst of our troubles, which is our greatest problem. As David sees his God in his troubles, he is able to lie down and sleep, though he would be defenseless if attacked. But, no worries, because it is You, Lord, who is watching over him and will deliver him from any and all troubles. May we also learn to have our focus fixed on “You Lord” Jesus, who knows we have troubles in our lives, “But take heart, for I have overcome the world” He assures (Jn 16:33).

Ps 4 (11/21/23)

1. There are two people that David is speaking to—what does he say to God (4:1, 6-8) and can you relate, how; what does he say to his enemies (4:2-5) and what do you think; what do you learn?

- If I understand correctly, v. 7 sounds strange and beautiful. When I read the first portion of the verse, I was expecting the second portion would be about his grain and new wine to abound. But it wasn’t. It was “when their grain and new wine abound.” David was praying for joy in his heart when the grain of those people who were troubling him abound. Wow, I am so blown away. I have prayed for my enemies to be well, and I will leave it at that. But, I have never prayed that my heart will be joyful for their abounding. Father, thank You for once again showing me a greater way, Your way over mine. Just as You showed us that You love Your enemies, so having joy for the enemies goodness is so You. And I pray that my heart will be filled with more of You than me. As I see my brother David have Your heart, may my heart grow more like Yours. Praise You for You are beautiful. In Your Son’s name, I pray.

Ps 5 (11/22/23)

1. What is David doing and why; in v. 3, what is his attitude as he waits and how would that look like for him and for you; what do you learn from this psalm?

- In vv. 7 and 11, I love the first word “But.” Before v. 7, David speaks about how much God hates evil, but come v. 7, he hits the brake on God’s hatred and enters into God’s love, “But I, by Your great love, can come into Your house.” Not because he himself is not evil, but by God’s great love, David can come into God’s house. “But God” is the reason for David not standing in the company of evil, but dwelling in God’s house. Also prior to v. 11, David speaks about the guilt of their many sins, but the flow of the guilt stops because “But let all who take refuge in You be glad; let them ever sing for joy.” The flow of sin stops for those who take

refuge in God. Yes, though we should be swept away in our sinfulness, “But God” stops the slide and picks us up, because He is our refuge, our protection. Like for David, like for this psalm, life can be very difficult and painful, “But God” is present in our lives, and because of our God, our sins will not sweep us away. Our God is truly our refuge. Praise His name! When life becomes very difficult, please remember “But God” is present in your life, in our lives.

Ps 6 (11/23/23)

1. In vv. 1-7, how did David experience God’s discipline over him; yet how does he expect to be delivered (v. 4) and why would he believe that; in vv. 8-9, what is he sure of despite his present hardships; what do you learn?
 - The flow of this psalm brings both sight and faith. David is suffering and struggling with afflictions that seem quite overwhelming. He wants God to deliver him, though he believes it is God who is disciplining him. But, despite God’s hand in his pain, David is sure that God will deliver him. Because in God’s unfailing love, He hears the prayers of His people and deliver us. I appreciate so much of David’s faith, for not losing sight of his God, in the midst of pain, when everything, including God, can be very fuzzy. And then David ends this psalm with a bang, declaring that his enemies will truly suffer shame, even though, presently it is him suffering. To see more than the present, to see more than sight, and to be able to see by faith our present lives, will truly bring a whole new perspective and belief on how life will unfold.

Ps 7 (11/24/23)

1. Despite his innocence, what are the people around David doing to him and why would they; where does David seek his deliverance and why; though his present situation hasn’t change, what is his expectation and why (v. 17); what do you learn?
 - In v. 7, David says, “God is a righteous judge, a God who displays His wrath every day.” I never thought about God’s righteousness displaying His wrath every day. I always thought of righteousness as cleanness and forgiveness, because I was always thinking from my end, as a recipient of God’s righteousness. But, it makes sense, for on the other side, in order to make sin into righteousness, God’s wrath over our sins is the punishment. If our sins are not forgiven, then God’s wrath is the only outcome for sin. “A God who displays His wrath every day,” is a frightening image to behold. But that would be true for us, if our God did not pay for our sins and cleansed us with His death, to clothe us with His righteousness. Wow, God’s character and truth is so much greater, so much more beautiful, and at times, so much more frightening than I thought, than I understand, than I know.

Ps 8 (11/25/23)

1. Who is God and how does He see people, including you; in light of how God sees you, are there ways you see yourself and other people that are different than His, will you list those differences; will you write a prayer and pray specifically that the ways you see differently than God, He will bless you to change your view and attitude more like His (Rom 3:4)?
 - It is rare in our world to see someone so high care for someone so low. In our world, the people up high, not only not care for the lowly, but uses and bully the lowly. We, Christians, must be careful that we reflect our God’s way, and not the world’s. Let’s pray that our hearts

and attitudes and words and deeds will display God's beauty, while we are living in this world. May other people see, that we live in this world, but we are clearly not of this world.

Ps 9 (11/27/23)

1. Who is God for David in this chapter and how does he respond to God; what happens to the people of the world and why; in light of God's revelation in this chapter, how can you see and live your life more in line with His character?
 - In v. 2, we read, "I will be glad and rejoice in You." Many times in our lives, we can fall in love with the gift much more than the Giver. It's easy to be captured by how our God protects us, and forget Him. When we love what He can do for us much more than Him, than we will inevitably fall in love with what our God can do for us, much more than fall in love with Him. That is why, v. 2, when David says, "I will be glad and rejoice in You," caught my eyes. Surely, David was praising God for His protection over his enemies. But, through God's protection, David has his eyes on God. God's work for him made David fall in love with his God more. David loved the Giver more than the gifts. I pray that will be true for all of us, to fall in love with our God more than His gifts, more than all the wonderful things He does. In fact, may all the wonderful things He does for us, only cause us to look to Him more, to fall in love with Him more, and delight to grow more like Him, so that our image will grow more like He. May we never be a people who uses our God for our good. May we always be a people who love our God for what He does for us. More than the gifts, may we fall in love with the Giver, our God.

Ps 10 (11/28/23)

1. According to this psalm, why does the Psalmist feel that God is far off; what are some of the reasons why the people in the world feel that God is not present; have you ever felt that God was not near and if so, when and why was that, do you know; however, before he ends this psalm, how does the psalmist see his God; what do you learn?
 - (Here's a short note I think it will be helpful.)
 - Why does it sometimes seem like God is far away? God promised His people, the Lord will deliver them to you, and you must do to them all that I have commanded you (Deut 31:5). Yet sometimes God seems distant. During such times, the ever-present God hasn't gone anywhere. Instead, specific obstacles we create or experience can make God seem far away.
 - One obstacle is busyness. Our overloaded schedules can crowd out time with God and make it difficult to sense His presence in our lives. When Jesus arrived for dinner at the home of friends, Martha chose to busy herself with kitchen duties while her sister sat at the feet of Jesus and was commended for doing what was better (Lk 10:38-42). Busyness isn't next to godliness. In fact, our crammed calendars can cause us to miss connecting with God daily.
 - A second obstacle is "stuff," or possessions. In Matthew 19:16-22, Jesus urged a man to sell all he had and to follow Him, but the man went away sad, because he had great wealth (Mt 19:22). Unfortunately, possessions and wealth can prevent people from pursuing Jesus. He warned, Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Mt 6:21). So, if our hearts wander after more and more stuff, we will have little room for God.
 - A third obstacle is sin. Christians can be secure in their relationship with God because their sins have been forgiven through Jesus' death on the cross. But lingering sin in our lives can still stand in the way of present fellowship with God. Fortunately, when we confess our sins, repent and obey God, we will feel the Father's love and personal presence once again (Jn 14:23, 25-27).

Ps 11 (11/29/23)

1. Despite David's trust in God, who tells him to flee to your mountain and why; where is God and what does He do there; how does David understand of his God and why would that minister to him; what do you learn?

- As we start this psalm, we see that David was told to flee because the foundations of the righteous were being destroyed. From Saul and his son Absalom, David did flee. But, here, he refuses, because, as he says, "In the Lord I take refuge." In the midst of dark times and ever present danger, David's feet will stay and follow his Lord, because He alone is his refuge. David truly believed, the problem of our lives is not the presence of trouble, but the absence of Christ (his God) in the midst of the troubles. May our God also bless us for us to learn and believe, when we take refuge in our Lord, we do not have to flee, because when He is with us, who can stand against Him, and if they did, they would receive His hatred, and who would survive such fierce God? Oh Lord, I pray that all of us would truly believe, "In the Lord I take refuge" is most precious and more than sufficient in our lives.

Ps 12 (11/30/23)

1. What is David encountering from the people around him and in what ways is that similar to our world; can you think of some of those ways that impact your life; what happens in v. 5 and how does that change David's perspective and attitude about what he is encountering; what do you learn?

- In v. 5, God speaks. And David's prior struggles turns into a declaration of God's goodness over His people, who are living in the midst of much distress and misery. The present struggles were no longer the main concern for David. Now, because he heard God speak, God's goodness is where David turns his focus, while still in the midst of the present struggles. This is how our faith should be lived out in this world. While we struggle with the world's ugliness, when we hear, when we remember, when we learn God's truth, it is His truth that must prevail in our hearts and lives, so that our focus will turn from the troubles of life to God and His work, His goodness, His ways to rule and reign over our hearts and lives. Today, as I am struggling in my heart, I am reminded of Ps 37:4, "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will fill the desires of your life." Oh Lord, I pray for Your blessings to keep my focus on delighting on You, and not on my desires. In fact, may my greatest desire be to delight in You.

Ps 13 (12/1/23)

1. As David begins this psalm, where does he think God is and why would he think that; but as he ends this psalm, what happened and why; what do you learn?

- Notes—Why were David's emotions so erratic?
- Within five verses David moved from spiritual despair to hope; from gut-wrenching, internal wrestling to complete trust; from deep sorrow to rejoicing. What caused these dramatic changes?
- One explanation may be that David's psalms are simply snapshots of his feelings. As he gradually worked through issues, his confidence in God returned. But the changes may have occurred more slowly than it appears from reading the compressed account in these few verses.

- Another explanation may be that David knew how to express feelings and faith simultaneously. Perhaps David revealed his emotions on one level but expressed his core beliefs on another level.
- David's mood changes reflect the feelings of normal people struggling with their faith. Perhaps that's why so many people can identify with Psalms.

Ps 14 (12/2/23)

1. What does the fool believe, and therefore, how does he act; who does the Lord look for and what does He find; and yet, why is there hope in the end; what do you learn?

- The man, the fool, acts consistently with his belief. He does not believe there is a God; therefore, he acts without thinking of accountability or judgment to come for his evil actions. However, God acts inconsistent. Though He knows there are no one righteous, no one does good, and yet, in the end, instead of rejecting everyone as the people have rejected Him, He becomes a refuge for the poor. In fact, in the end, He will save His people, the very people whom He said, "All have turned away, all have become corrupt, there is no one who does good, not even one." If justice was applied, there should be, not even one, who are saved. But, again, inconsistent with true justice, it is His plan to save some of the people who have not done any good, not even one. How do you praise inconsistency, and yet, how can I not, when if God judged me consistently with His true justice, I deserve nothing less than what the fool must receive. But this fool is considered righteous, all because our God chose to take our place to receive what we fools deserved, so I am judged by His robe, while our God is judged for our rags. What an exchange; what a God!

Ps 15 (12/4/23)

1. What is this psalm about; in vv. 2 and 3, what are the differences; what do you learn from this psalm and how can it (or they) be applied to your life?

- In v. 4, David teaches us to "despise a vile person but honor those who fear the Lord." As much as we are to love, to encourage and to be positive, when it is wrong, we are to despise, to hate, and to judge. The yes and no go together, the love and hate go together. Of course, we must do so humbly, with lots of discernment. But, what's right, we are to love, and what's wrong-evil-sinful we are to hate. But, our God goes beyond my understanding, because He will love even those whom He should hate, that is, He even loves the sinners, who are sinning. But, that happens all because the holy Father sees us sinners through His righteous Son, so that our sinfulness is covered in Him. Oh Father, I don't always know how to discern everything, but I pray for Your heart in me, in us, so that we would love what You love and hate what You hate, and even love those whom we should hate because of our Savior Jesus.

Ps 16 (12/5/23)

1. What is the best thing in life for David and why would he think so (and how much truth is that for you); how was God David's portion and cup; what did he mean "nor will you let your faithful one see decay" (Ac 2:25-28; 13:35); what do you learn?

- As much as we appreciate all the good things our God gives us, but to see beyond that, and to see God Himself as the greatest gift, as David does here, is amazing. David was not loving God because He is just the giver of all good things. David loved God more than all the good things. I want to love God and delight in God like David. I want God to be the greatest gift, and to truly believe He truly is sufficient and supreme for me. I pray that You will truly be my first

and greatest love of my life. I know this is not the case for me at the moment. I see myself easily disappointed when things do not go well. I long for success and respect and love in ways that showers me more than Your glory. May I truly love when You increase and I decrease. Dying to self is really hard. I want to live so much, to be greater than I am. So, Lord, don't let me be what I want. Bless me to want to magnify You above my life, above all things in my life.

Ps 17 (12/6/23)

1. In vv. 11-12, what was the state of David's life; in vv. 4-5, how did David lived amongst the people; where did David find his strength and how and why; what do you learn?
 - The closure of this psalm in v. 15 is interesting. In the present, he was surrounded by his enemies, who were like fierce lions hungry for prey. Everything about his present situation looked bleak, overwhelming against him. But, despite the present reality, he concludes this psalm, his present situation, by looking up, by believing and speaking in faith, in faith of what his God can and will do for him, that is, God will vindicate him. I am not sure he had any visible evidence that he will get out of this trouble alive. But his evidence came, not on what he could see, but on whom He saw, and that's what faith is, believing in the object of our faith, who rises above our troubles, because He is the almighty and compassionate God, who cares and delivers His children. To be able to see our God in the midst of troubles, which seem overwhelming, is what faith, in the object of our faith, allows us to see. In other words, faith opens our eyes to our God, and see Him more than sufficient, more than powerful, more than we are able to do, for with Him, nothing is too hard (Jer 32:17).

Ps 18 (12/7/23)

1. From the introduction, when and why did David write this psalm; how close to his destruction did David feel (will you point out which verses speak to this); how was he delivered and will you describe the many ways he describes; what do you learn?
 - In v. 36, David says that God provides a broad path for his feet so that his ankles do not give way. Sometimes, because of my weak ankles because of my basketball injuries, I tweak and fall. So, to have a broad path that can support my ankle, it means I can keep going strong, without falling. That's how our God provides and cares for us, even for people with weak ankles. He knows our weakness, and He provides "broadly." How thoughtful, how gracious, how generously He provides.

Ps 19 (12/8/23)

1. What are the two things the psalmist extols (19:1-6, 7-14); how and why are they so beautiful to him; when you consider both, what can you extol in your life and can you describe how it is impacting your life?
 - I am amazed and very envious of David, who can hear the speech of the day and read the message of the nights of God's goodness and greatness. To be able to see the world and to read God's way in them is incredible. Since the world is God's creation, they would describe and point to her Creator's beauty, if only we knew how to read them and hear them, though they often come without a sound, without letters. I know and understand so little. Father, I pray

that I will learn and delight to learn more of You and Your ways, and truly love You and Your ways more than anything in life. May You truly be my greatest joy and excitement.

Ps 20 (12/9/23)

1. What is the psalmist seeking from the Lord and where do you think he is going and why would you think that; what is the difference between where he trusts and others; how is this applicable in your life?
- When marching to the battle, it's natural and logical and smart to trust in the greater weapons, which at the time would be chariots and horses. I heard this saying in a movie, you don't bring a knife to a gun fight. It's no competition. Though others are trusting in their big guns, and David may not have the big guns, and though it may appear that he is bringing knives, but his trust is in something, someone, much bigger, and that is in His invisible God, which others would not naturally see. And that's the beauty and mystery of our faith, for faith opens our eyes to the One who is not visible, but our trust is in Him, whom the world may not see or recognize or acknowledge, but we do, and we will, under whatever the circumstance. So, they may ridicule us because their trust is in something visible, something tangible, something they know it really works, and they believe it's more powerful, but our trust in our God will not waver, because we truly believe He who is in us is greater than the one in the world (1Jn 4:4).

Ps 21 (12/11/23)

1. How does David open and close this psalm and how does that impact the way he sees his life, including in the battles; is there anything specific that you notice; how truthful and impactful is David's confession in your life?
- In v. 7, David declares that he will not be shaken whatever situations or circumstances or happenings or troubles or problems or battles with the enemies comes charging into his life. As easily he should and could be shaken, he declares that he will not shake, not because of anything good he has in him or around him, but his one and only confidence comes because of God's unfailing love for him. I pray, like David, that we will be able to filter out everything around us, despite the many, many events, situations and happenings that can easily shake us, discourage us, trouble us, for us to be able to see, to focus, to fix our eyes on our God and His unshakeable, unfailing, unconditional, unending love, proven to us on His cross, will be our one and only reason why our trust rest on Him alone. When our trust is tied to God's unfailing love for us in His cross, then the shaking in us will stop.

Ps 22 (12/12/23)

1. How does David open this psalm and why; how does David close this psalm and why; can you connect at least two portions of this psalm where the gospel writers used and how; what do you learn from this psalm?
- As abandoned, as forsaken, as forgotten David laments he is, as he starts this psalm, the way he closes this psalm is stunning, as he includes everyone, not only the poor but the rich, not only the present but also the future generations will all worship and praise God. How can he be so sure, where and how did he receive his confidence on the turnaround of God's presence, when presently, he feels completely abandoned and forsaken? To me, this is how his faith triumphed over what he saw and felt. If he judged his situation with what he saw, with what he thought he knew, then his only conclusion was that God had forsaken him, that God

is nowhere near him. That is why, our faith cannot be grounded on simply with what we think we believe. Our faith cannot stem from within us. Our faith must be grounded and anchored only in the object of our faith, and see the God who is the reason and resource of our faith, the God who sent His Son, the God who willingly came to us, and the God who illumines His truth, the Trinity together at work in our faith. Only when God is visible, would our troubles appear smaller. The content of our troubles would not change, but our perspective will, because we will see our troubles in light of the greatness of our God, and with Him, “Nothing is too hard for You” (Jer 32:17).

Ps 23 (12/13/23)

1. How does David describe his relationship with his God and how true is that for you; how could God’s rod and staff bring comfort; why prepare a meal in the presence of the enemies; which areas of your relationship with God from these verses have you experienced and which areas would you like to pray to experience more?
 - This psalm begins with, “The Lord is my Shepherd,” and to me, if this is our true beginning and the springboard to every step and moments and days of my life, then I know I am secure, because my Shepherd is none other than the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Maker of all mankind, the Almighty God in whom there’s nothing too hard, the compassionate God who loves me so amazingly that He even sent His only begotten Son to take my place, to receive my curse, only to cover me with His righteousness. That’s my Lord, and He is my Shepherd. So despite the emptiness, the depression, the troubles that seem to haunt me, truly, all are in His hands, so I truly lack nothing, if only I can keep my gaze on Him, my Shepherd, my Lord, my God.

Ps 24 (12/14/23)

1. What is the message of v. 1 and how is this truth shaping your life; from v. 4, how can you tell the requirement to entering the temple was both external and internal and can you explain from your life; when you have failed, how can you still enter into God’s presence; what more do you learn from this psalm?
 - If we interpret the requirement for entering the temple simply from v. 4, we would all be in trouble, because none of us are perfectly clean, neither in all of our actions and certainly not in our hearts, intentions, motivations and purpose either. So, if we sought answers only from within us, then all of us have clearly fallen short of God’s glory. That’s why, the following verse 5, is so precious, as we are taught, “They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior.” Blessings is from Him, and the vindication comes from Him, and not from within, nor from anywhere else. Only in Him, in our God, who has a name, and His name is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. Because He clothed us with His righteousness, by removing our sinfulness unto Himself, are we cleansed from our sins, are we cleansed from all that is not perfect in us, all that we have fallen short of, because He has filled it, actually He has completely removed all that were wrong in us, and perfectly filled every part of us, both the outside and the inside, to be righteous even under God’s holy sight. So, we truly can enter into God’s temple, not because we earned it with our good works, but because our God, has earned it in our behalves, and gifted us His righteousness, as if it was ours to claim.

Ps 25 (12/15/23)

1. What was David's situation at this time; where is he looking for his deliverance and why and how; how does he conclude this psalm and why so; how is this applicable to you?
 - In vv. 6-7, I appreciate the way the word "remember" is use. David asks God to remember him with God's great mercy and love which was from the beginning, before it had anything to do with him. He asks God to remember him, according to Your love remember me, for You, Lord, are good. David is desiring that God remember him out of the goodness of God's love, which is so much more than what he has done or not done. Actually, David asks God to not remember the sins of his youth and his rebellious ways. So, David wants God to remember His goodness, but not remember his badness. This actually happens to all God's people, because ultimately God remembers His goodness over us in Jesus, and He will not remember our badness because Jesus covered and paid for them all. As this is how God treats me, I ask myself, how do I remember with people? Do I remember God's goodness over them in Jesus, and do I choose to not remember their badness because of what Jesus did? Here, I see my failure. I remember too long someone else's badness, instead of covering them in Jesus. Instead of remembering others in God's goodness because of Jesus, I often remember their badness done, though Jesus has already covered them and has cleansed them. Too often I remember without Jesus involved. Oh Lord, please bless me to remember with Jesus covering, over the bad and for the reason for the good. Oh Lord, we want to remember all things with Jesus, and bless us to not mis-remember without Jesus.

Ps 26 (12/16/23)

1. In vv. 4-5, who are the four types of people that David will not associate and why; what is it that David wants and how did his life reflect his desire; in what ways does your life reflect your true desires and in what ways do they not?
 - Though David has lived a blameless life, an examined life, a life mindful of God's unfailing love, still he does not rest on his good works to save him, but clings to God to vindicate him. David does not ask God to save him because he is worthy, but his salvation will come because God is merciful and gracious, that is, God's salvation is from God and not from men. I often describe good works, not as a prescription to our salvation but as a description. And I see that here. David's good works is not the prescription to his salvation, but his good works describe the salvation that his amazing God gave him. In fact, the more wonderfully our saved lives reflect, the greater the description of the greatness of the salvation that our God gave. Said it differently, the poorer the life of the saved person is, the poorer the description of the God who saved him. But truth be told, no salvation of a sinner was ever a small task. Every salvation of a sinner is an impossible work that no human could ever achieve on its own. Therefore, every life saved from sin into God's eternal life, should reflect a most amazing, grateful, miraculous experience and expression, because our God accomplished for us what we could never do on our own.

Ps 27 (12/18/23)

1. How is the tone different starting in v. 7; what messages from this chapter ministers to you and why; what is David ultimately confident about and how can you also learn such lesson?

- I can't imagine begin forsaken by my father and mother, forsaken by the most dearest people in my life, and still under such pain, David still has God to look up to, and find his refuge. To know, the people I hold dearest forsakes me, would be so devastating, that I would probably completely be broken. But, again, God shows me through David, that as wonderful as the people whom I love, they are not, they must not be my ultimately refuge, my ultimate strength. To learn to look up, to learn to have my heart say, "Seek His face!" and to see my heart truly seek His face, is where I ultimately want to reach. Oh Lord, bless me to seek Your face, even when everyone has turned their faces away from me.

Ps 28 (12/19/23)

1. How is God a Rock and how was that applied to David's life and in yours; in David's eye, what made him different than the people who have no regard for God; how are you different than the people of the world—are you different, why and how?
- David opens this psalm, asking and pleading with God to hear him, to treat him different than the people of the world. But, starting in v. 6, his pleading turns into praise, and he is certain that God has heard his cry, that he will be strong because his God was with him. In fact, not only for him, but for all God's people, God hears, He strengthens, He saves His people. How did his confidence on his God come about, we are not told here. But I thought of two things. First of all, as he pleaded, as he prayed to God, the prayer time with God, made him more confident that his God heard him, and if his God hears him, then he would believe that God will work for him. And if God is for him, then he knew no one would be able to stand against him. Secondly, the more he prayed the more he got to meditate and remember God's truth, and the truth of God's mighty presence began to take hold of him, giving him faith to believe in the object of his faith more. The better we see because we remember better God's truth, the more faith and trust will we have, for our God is a God who does not lie. I pray that our pleading and asking will also turn into confident praises of our God because we also see more of God's greatness, more of His goodness, and more of His compassion for His people, even for us.

Ps 29 (12/20/23)

1. What do you think it means to worship in the splendor of His holiness and how have you tried to do this; what do you notice about the voice of God and in what ways have you heard His voice speak powerfully to you, that has transformed your life?
- I want to learn to worship our God in the splendor of His holiness. As I meditate here, I notice two words, splendor and holiness. When I think of splendor, I think of glorious and magnificent celebration. I think of an awe inspiring goodness that overflows beyond my ability. And when I think of holiness, I think about what's right, not just right, but right so beautiful that to be wrong or to stray from right would seem so wrong, so ugly that I would not want any part of it. This right is not rigid, it is not suffocating, it is not overbearing, it is not no fun. This right is captivating, so loving, so desirable, so sweet, it is like a swimming pool inviting me to jump in, on an unbearably hot day, and the water in the pool is sure to cool me off, to refresh me, to be in no better place on that hot day. I want to learn and to worship our God in the splendor of His holiness. Oh Lord, please bless our church to hunger, to strive, to learn, to give ourselves completely over to You, that we may worship You in the splendor of Your holiness.

Ps 30 (12/21/23)

1. Why did David want to exalt God; what's the difference between God's anger and His favor and why would that be; how did God turn David's wailing and removed his sackcloth; how is that applicable to you?

- (Here's a short note from my Bible.)
- Why did God hide His face from David (30:7). In verses 6-7, David confessed that he had grown arrogant and had forgotten about God in the midst of the success God had given him. So God withdrew His presence from him to remind David how much David needed Him. David responded to God's absence by renewing his relationship with Him (v. 8).

Ps 31 (12/22/23)

1. What was David's present state (vv. 9-13); but despite his present reality, what does David do and how and why did that make a difference in his life; what does he tell the other people to do (vv. 23-24); how is this applicable to you?

- In the final two verses, David addresses to the people around him. Though he has suffered much and is trying to find his footing, through all of his agony, God has his heart turn to others around him, to bless them, to encourage them, to challenge them, to love and to trust in the Lord. It is not enough that David rises from his struggles, but through them all, he is to be a voice, a messenger, a sign that points to the people around him, turn and look and trust and hope in God alone, for He alone is to be trustworthy, worthy of all of our love because it is He who truly preserves His people, as weak and frail we may be.

Ps 32 (12/23/23)

1. What happens when sin is kept hidden and not confessed; can you remember when this happened to David; do you have sins hidden and not confessed; why would God not count our sins against us when we are guilty; how are all of our sins forgiven?

- In vv. 8-9, while David is confessing and sharing his life, God interjects. God speaks. God wants His people to hear from Him. He does not want His people to be like the horse or the mule, and be controlled by bit and bridle to come to Him. Our steps, our coming, our nearness, our relationship to our God should not be controlled by the sweet gifts we receive. Just as He is in love with us, so should our love for our God should drive us to want to come near Him, to be with Him, to walk with Him, to enjoy His company more than anything or anyone. Not by bit and bridle, not by gifts and rewards, but by Him, His love for us should arouse our love for Him, with and at times, without His gifts because it is Him we want most.

Ps 33 (12/25/23)

1. What are we told about who God is; what are we told to not do and why; what are we told to do and why; what do you want more in your life and how do you think that can come about?

- In v. 3, I paused as I read, "play skillfully." It is wonderful to want to love and serve and sing wholeheartedly. But, here, I read more than my devotion. I read refinement. I read practice. I read efforts to improve and do better, so I can play skillfully and beautifully. Amen and amen.
- Merry Christmas!
- Blessings to you and to your family and to your love ones!

Ps 34 (12/26/23)

1. When did David write this psalm; how would you describe it; where are God's eyes-ears-face and what do they mean; what stands out to you about this psalm and why and which ones have you seen in your life and would like to see more?

- (Here's a short note from my Bible.)
- Does God help us out of all our troubles? Not exactly, as life's sorrows and heartaches easily demonstrate. The Lord does not promise to remove our difficulties so much as to see us through them. God can use even trouble to accomplish His purposes: Jesus was made perfect through what He suffered (Heb 2:10). With God's help, troubles can mature us. The bottom line is that God changes something—if He doesn't change our troubles, then He changes us.

Ps 35 (12/27/23)

1. What does David want God to do for him and why; how did he treat these people and how did they repay him (vv. 12-115); what does David continue to plead to God to do and not do; what do you learn and how can you apply it in your life?

- Clearly for David, God was on his side and not theirs. Though his enemies seem many and stronger, David believes his God is so much stronger, and when God fights for him, then the enemies will be ruined. So, for David, it was not for him to fight his enemies, but to arouse his God to fight for him. Though it was his battle, David wanted God to fight for him. It was like a child asking his father to come and beat up his bullies. As long as we also know that our God is our Father and He truly is much stronger than our bullies, then that's the privilege and joy of the child, to call on Dad and tell him to beat up those guys causing trouble for us, for me. The question is, do you believe God is your Father, and do you believe He is truly much stronger than your troubles? If that's the case, then let's act like His child, let's go to our Father.

Ps 36 (12/28/23)

1. When does self-confidence become deadly self-flattery (vv. 1-4); will you explain v. 9 and how is it applicable in your life; how else does David describe God and how are they applicable in your life?

- (Here's a short note from my Bible.)
- How does a shadow offer protection? This is a conventional Hebrew metaphor for God's protection and care. As a shadow provides relief from the merciless desert sun, and as a bird covers her young in the nest, so God provides a place of refuge. Jesus expressed His concern for the people of Jerusalem in a similar manner, saying that He longed to protect them, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings (Matt 23:37).

Ps 37 (12/29/23)

1. What are God's people to "not fret" (to become excited or to be angry) about and why; rather, what are God's people to do and why; what ministers to you most from this psalm and how can you live it out?

- God used Ps 37:4 to capture my heart and guided my steps, especially in my decision to enter into the Seminary to pursue a full time ministry. In His word, I understood my job was to

“delight in Him,” and His job was to give me “the desires of my heart.” If my desires are apart from my delight in Him, then it would be very selfish and most likely very sinful. So, we must never understand God’s word apart from the context, or otherwise, we will most likely misread and misunderstand. My desires come connected with my job, which is, to delight in Him. That means, when I seek His delight, then my greatest desires becomes seeking what delights Him most. Oh, how I needed this, because without seeking His delight, I would have sought so many things, including money for tuition and support from family and friends for my comfort, even more than God and His ways. By keeping my delight in Him, God placed in my heart a greater love for Him and His ways. Without this Scripture, I would have probably not pursued my obedience in His leading, for I would have been consumed with my desires, and not seek first, my delight in Him.

Ps 38 (12/30/23)

1. What was David struggling with and what were the consequences; how was he wrestling to get out of his struggles (vv. 15-22); if you should struggle as David is, what will you do; how can you apply 1Jn 1:8-2:2 in your life?
- Wow, we have reached the end of this year, 2023. God was faithful. And He will always be faithful. Thank You Lord!
 - If you feel like singing of God’s faithfulness, go ahead.

Great is Thy faithfulness (#393)

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father - There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
 Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not - As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
 *Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see;
 All I have needed Thy hand hath provided; Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest, - Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
 Join with all nature in manifold witness, To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.
 *Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see;
 All I have needed Thy hand hath provided; Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
 Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow - Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!
 *Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see;
 All I have needed Thy hand hath provided; Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Ps 39 (1/1/24)

1. What does David want to do with his tongue and why; as he speaks, what does he want to know and why; what would you want to be quiet and what would you want to speak on this year and why?
- Unlike the many psalms we read thus far, this one ends differently. Though David’s hope is in God to save him, and yet, the ending sounds more desperation than certainty of triumph. Wow, what a way to start the new year with this psalm. We want to be humble and more quiet as to when and why we speak. To seek to know when life’s end is coming, knowing it is a mere handbreadth, meaning, it can come soon, it can end any day. To learn to live our days,

not as many left, but few, would be different, very different. If our hearts are set on living here for many days, then this psalm unsettles us. But, if home was not here, and we are passing through, then the shortness of life will not be intrusive, rather, welcoming. The shorter our stay here, the quicker we will go home, come home, be home. Home is where our hearts are. May home fill our hearts so much, that our words here will be guided by home, and our search in life will be about learning to navigate better our roads to home. Home is where we want to be.

- May the new year be filled with your love and longing for home!

Ps 40 (1/2/24)

1. What is David doing before God and why; what does “Aha! Aha” mean and why does that bother David; what does David know about God that makes him act this way; how does it apply to your life?

- Verse 3 reads, “He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in Him.” A song and a hymn, we think of hearing and listening, and not seeing. So, the question I asked was, how do you see a song? And my answer was, in the life of the singer. In other words, the new song was as much as seen in the life of the person as much as heard through the singer. The song and the lifestyle spread the same message. This insight seems very applicable to our lives. We live in a time when praises sound beautiful in our churches; yet, the lifestyle of many Christians who sing these songs, do not always reflect such truth and grace in our lives. So, let me remind all of us, let’s sing our songs beautifully for all to hear, but let’s also live our new songs so that the people who see our lives can hear how lovely and worthy and amazing the God we worship is, because our lives truly reflect Him and His beautiful ways.

Ps 41 (1/3/24)

1. When we are in trouble, what is our enemy’s desire, what should be ours, and what is God’s desire for us?

- In v. 9, David shares the pain of betrayal “Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.” As painful and personal his pain was, this actually turned out to be about something more than David’s pain. One of David’s descendant said, “I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared My bread has turned against Me’” (Jn 13:18). Here, Jesus was speaking about the betrayal He would suffer at the hands of one of His disciples, Judas, with whom He poured His life for the last three and a half years of His life. To sacrificially and unconditionally love, and to receive back a betrayal, sold for the price of a slave, what an exchange. Jesus keeps making bad exchanges, doesn’t He? Here with Judas, and He would do it again with me, to pour His love and grace only to receive my sins. Have you experienced Jesus’ bad exchange in your life? Do you know anyone who needs this exchange with Jesus?

Ps 42 (1/4/24)

1. Who are the sons of Korah; why is the psalmist downcast; what are the people around him saying; where is he finding his comfort and how; what do you learn?
- When we are downcast, it is usually like falling into a rabbit hole. We are usually very consumed with our problems, and it’s really difficult to come out from there because we do not see anything else, especially anything good. Amazingly, the psalmist is able to place his hope in God. And the question is how? In v. 6, he confesses, “My soul is downcast within me;

therefore I will remember You...” Wow, he is able to remember God when he is downcast. For many of us, we usually forget God when we are downcast, distraught, and struggling. Like the words of the enemies, our thoughts will probably think, has God forsaken me? And the devil will stimulate many real thoughts as to why God has every reason to forsake us. And how true they are. We know, we deserved nothing good from God, because we have offered nothing good to Him. So, if we count on our good works, then to be forsaken by God is right, and being downcast should be the result. And by God’s grace, we must remember here, not our reasons to be forsaken, to not look on our good works, but to remember God, and what He has done, despite how undeserving we are. We remember how our God loved us when we were unlovable. How He forgave us while we were still sinners. How He sacrificed Himself when we had no redeemable quality. It wasn’t in us that made our God loved us, so it isn’t in us to make our God forgive us or to not forsake us. So, if we remember what our God did in Jesus, then we can place and find our hope in God through Jesus, which is how, we can be lifted from our downcast and see the overflow of His praise in us. Let’s pray for God’s grace to bless us “to remember our God” when we are downcast.

Ps 43 (1/5/24)

1. How are the people treating the psalmist; how does he feel God is treating him (v. 2); how is he feeling; yet, where is he finding hope, how; what do you learn?

- Though the psalmist feels rejected by God, yet his hope is in God. He wants God’s light and faithfulness to lead him. In fact, he calls his God, “my joy and my delight.” This is amazing, to feel rejected by God and yet to seek Him only, to want Him only, because He truly alone is his joy and delight. Of course, we know that our God does not reject His people, because His Son was forsaken on the cross on our behalves. The psalmist did not have the benefit to learn about Jesus’ substitutionary death for us. And it would have been easy for him to deny God because of the feeling of rejection he felt. But, praise the Lord, that his feeling did not rule his faith. Despite what he strongly felt, he learned to submit to God’s word over what he felt. Let God be true and every man (and woman, including our feelings) a liar. May our faith also grow to trust in God’s word more than our feelings, even over the feelings of rejection from God.

Ps 44 (1/6/24)

1. In vv. 1-3, what is the psalmist doing; in vv. 4-8, how is it different than the previous verses; but starting in v. 9, what’s his reality and what’s his prayer; what do you learn?

- (Here’s a short note from my Bible.)
- The psalmist begins by recounting stories of God passed down by his ancestors (v. 1). These reminders call God to act and deliver as He had before. They also served to remind people of God’s power, encouraging them to trust in Him.

Ps 45 (1/8/24)

1. What kind of psalm is this; what do you learn about the bridegroom; what do you learn about the bride; what do you learn about their future; what do you learn?

- I love reading v. 11, “Let the King (the bridegroom) be enthralled by your beauty (the bride); honor him, for he is your lord.” What an amazing image to behold, that the husband will be completely captured and charmed by the beauty of his wife, and still, for the wife to delight to honor him, because he is the lord the Lord has set for their family. Of course, the beauty of the

bride goes so much deeper than the outer appearance. Yes, the bride should do her best to always make herself beautiful on the outside, but far, far, far more important and beautiful and meaningful is the beauty within, in her heart, in her character, in her words, in all of her demeanors and attitudes. Of course, I am speaking as a man, as a husband. I want to be captured and charmed by the beautiful heart of my wife, that I will delight to sacrifice anything, do anything because of my love for her. And yet, for my wife, to never feel entitled, but to delight to honor her husband because he is the lord the Lord has set him for the family. To love her and to honor him goes hand in hand, as husband and wife.

Ps 46 (1/9/24)

1. Who does the psalmist say God is; what are the frightening things happening all around him, and yet, in light of who God is, how does that impact the psalmist's heart and life; what does God desire for His people to do; what do you learn?
- Again and again in God's word, we hear and see how different, how opposite the ways of the world is to God's teaching. In verses 2-3, we almost see a complete chaos in the world, as it is reversing the goodness of how God created the world. In fact, God speaks to His people to be still, even when all around us seems to overturn God's good order. And the hope and the reason for such calmness during disaster has only one foundation, and that is, because he knows his God is almighty, which is why, he finds refuge and strength in times of ever-present trouble. As we well know within our own hearts, the happenings around us shapes the way we respond. But our God is teaching us, not the happenings, but who He is, is what should dictate, determine, shape, mold, impact and lead our lives. When we know who He is and what He can do for us, then the things of the world must fall into second place. The happenings of the world will ultimately always submit before the Maker, who stands alone.

Ps 47 (1/10/24)

1. In what capacity does God reign over the nations; in what ways did God choose Jacob to be the inheritance; what are the nations to do and why; what do you learn?
- The command to the people in this psalm is to sing, to praise, to exalt, to clap, to shout to God with cries of joy. This praising God cannot be duty bound, cannot arise out of responsibility, cannot be from out of mere obedience. It can only come from the bottom of the heart that is overflowing with so much joy, that tears are also overflowing. That's the right kind of joy God wants and we want to offer to Him. May we truly delight to "shout to God with cries of joy." Yes. Yes. Yes. May I truly delight to "shout to God with cries of joy, overflowing with joy and tears."

Ps 48 (1/11/24)

1. How is God described and what does He do; when the enemies see God what happens; what should be the response of God's people as they behold their God; what do you learn?
- (Here's a short note from my Bible.)
 - How secure was Jerusalem? Very secure—provided its inhabitants put their trust in God. God's promise came with a stipulation: as long as their trust was in God, they would be safe. But if they relied on anything or anyone else or refused to serve the Lord, their security evaporated (Jer 7:13-15). The wars and turmoil that have stained Jerusalem's history do not disprove God's promise or security; rather, they prove the Israelites' unfaithfulness.

Ps 49 (1/12/24)

1. What is the wisdom message the psalmist wants for all to hear and learn; how does this wisdom message resonate in your life and how well (or not) do you live it, please explain?
 - In vv. 7-8, the psalmist speaks a human truth, that no person can redeem the life of another because the payment of the ransom price can never be enough. That is why, even the sacrificial and self-less and beautiful death of a loving mother for her child will not redeem her child. No person can redeem the life of another person, that's the limitation of a person. Knowing this, we see why the Redeemer of our lives had to be more than a person, and He was, for He was the perfect man and the perfect God, the Son of God, who came to be our substitute, to pay the ransom price for our sins, which we could not. Mark 10:45 points to us who could, "For even the Son of Man (the perfect God and the perfect Man—Jesus the Christ) did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (for all of His people)." So, let's understand, let's not cheapen God's redemption for us, for the cost was nothing short of God Himself coming and paying the price that no humans ever could. We need to see and understand how incredibly valuable God's redemption for us truly is. Simply said, people that Jesus redeemed are the most incredibly valuable people ever, for the life of our redemption was the life of the almighty God, Christ Jesus. If we have been redeemed by Jesus, then it means, we are the value of Jesus. Amazing! That's who we, the value of Jesus.

Ps 50 (1/13/24)

1. Who is the new psalmist, and do you recognize him; what does God want us to learn about sacrifices and why would that be; what do you learn?
 - V. 21 reads, "When you did these things and I kept silent, you thought I was exactly like you." This mindset gets carried over to us quite often, doesn't it? Too often, we think God is like us, and so we think God would act just like us. So, because we have a hard time forgiving some people, we think God has a hard time to forgive us, when in Christ, we are forgiven completely, eternally, unconditionally. Similarly with love, we have a hard time loving certain people, so it's hard to believe that God would love us, because we are like those certain people. In too many cases, too often, we keep bringing God down to our level, when He is nothing like us. He is so much greater, so much higher, so much more compassionate, so much more forgiving, so much more kinder, He truly is so much better than us. Oh Lord, I pray that we would not bring you down to our level; rather, bless us Lord greatly, please bless us to learn to think that You are not like us, but bless us to want to grow more like You.

Ps 51 (1/15/24)

1. When was this psalm written and will you read and summarize the event; what is David's earnest desire and why; why would he want to be cleansed with hyssop; what kind of sacrifice does God not like and what does He like; how do you know your sins, including your most terrible sin, are forgiven?
 - Sometimes in Psalms, maybe because it's so personal and painful, some things can be said that may not always sound consistent with the whole of the Scriptures. As one example, when we read v. 4, David says, "Against You, You only, have I sinned," of course, speaking to God. While it is true that all sin is truly against God first and foremost, in David's case, he also sinned against Uriah and his wife, Bathsheba, and against his nation. As a king, as a man, as

a husband, and as a believer, he abused his power and position, and sinned greatly. So, my thought is that David should have confessed that he has sinned against so many, especially to Uriah's family, and not only to God. God knows David's great sin against so many, and yet, God allows this psalm to remain as is. I must confess that I don't have God's great wisdom, so I don't understand why this would be. But, I do see even in my life, there are times, in order to express something, I sound one sided, and not the whole. I don't mean to contradict God's word, but I am so immersed in my little world, that at the time, I only see what's in front of me, and all I am trying to do is to express that. Our God is so wise, so patient, so gentle. Thank You!

Ps 52 (1/16/24)

1. From vv. 1-4, what is a wicked person like and why do you think that is; what will God do to them and why; where will the righteous person place his/her "trust" and "hope" and why; what do you learn?
- Verse 6 says that "the righteous will see and fear (the destruction of the wicked); they will laugh at you." The righteous should delight in the destruction of the wickedness, but not gloat over the enemy. There's a difference. Because wickedness is our enemy, we can rejoice in the destruction of the enemy who is out to destroy us. But, we are not to gloat, as if we were superior, as if we enjoyed their destruction. For as long as there is breath in anyone, including our enemies, they still have an opportunity to be saved from their sins, as we saw the criminal hung next to Christ and was saved at the last possible moment, right before his death. Moreover, we are not to gloat over our enemies, as if we are better than they, because we are not, because we too were saved while we were still sinners, who did not deserve God's grace. God is gracious, which is why, our trust and hope is only in Him, and not in anything we have done. So, we rejoice in the destruction of the wickedness, but will not gloat because we know, we too should have been destroyed like our enemy, except by the grace of God, who saved us, though we were undeserving. Thank You, God, for being so gracious.

Ps 53 (1/17/24)

1. What is the belief of a fool and how does he therefore live his life; what is God doing and what does He say; what is the psalmist desire and what should be the response; how is this psalm relevant in your life?
- (Here's a short note from my Bible.)
 - Has everyone turned from God? Yes, everyone (Rom 3:10). Even those who try to do right and obey God's commands fail sooner or later. Sin has corrupted human nature since Adam and Eve. We all turn away from God, since by nature we are corrupt. That's why we need a Savior (Is 53:6).

Ps 54 (1/18/24)

1. Who are the Ziphites in the introduction and what did they do and why (1Sam 23:19-29); in light of his situation, what is David seeking; when you are in trouble, is your prayer the last resort or your first, and how can you change for the better?
- Here, David moves very quickly from petition to praise. This reminds me of Philippians 4:4-9, as we are taught to bring all of our struggles in prayer and thanksgiving. And having brought to God, we are to turn our hearts and minds into praises to our God, who has heard all of our

concerns. To know to whom we are turning, and to trust because we know He heard, is our faith and relationship with our Father. As we know, this does not happen if we allow our feelings to lead our lives. We must be led by God's truth and not our feelings, for our feelings often mis-understand and mis-interpret what happens to us. May not what happens decide our happiness, but may God's truth rule and guide our joy and peace. I pray, not what happens but what He said, may guide and lead our lives, our hearts and minds, including our feelings.

Ps 55 (1/19/24)

1. What is David suffering with, but why was it more painful; what does David want and from whom and how; yet, despite his present condition, what and where is his confidence and why; how is this applicable in your life?
- In v. 1, it is written, "Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea." Before, I used to read these words more literally, and understood them, as a man desperate to have God hear him, for somehow, he felt that God was not. While that can be true, now, I read these words a little differently. I read them as a desperate plea to God, but not because God does not hear him, but he seeks God because he knows his God is listening to him. So, he is not searching for his God who is not there, but he can desperately cling to God, because he knows He is there, and he wants to desperately cling to God. He will bring all of his pleas and cling to God, because in God alone he wants to trust. So, when I read these words, I read them as a plea of faith that believes in God and he is turning to God alone. He is pouring out his pain to God, because he believes God is listening to him. I like his tears of faith. I want more tears of faith.

Ps 56 (1/20/24)

1. What was happening to David; when he is afraid, what does he say he will do and why; when you are afraid, what do you do and why; what can you do differently when you are afraid and how and why?
- At the introduction to this psalm, we are told that this psalm was written by David, "when the Philistines had seized him in Gath." My Bible notes says, "probably refers to when David pretended to be insane before Achish the king of Gath (1Sam 21:10-15)." This means that David felt so threatened, that unless he acted like a madman, that he would not escape alive. Yet, under such fear and duress, this psalm speaks on trusting in God, praising Him, for as he says, "What can man do to me?" This reminds me of Paul's confession, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31). And of course, Paul continues on to say, "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us, ... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:37-39). To know who our God is, to believe what our God is willing to do, and to believe what He is willing to never happen to us gives us the confidence to trust Him in whatever situation we are facing. May our eyes be fixed on our God in all things of our lives.

Ps 57 (1/22/24)

1. Why was David in so much danger; under such difficult struggle, how is his heart and why; how does he act despite the troubles all around him and why; how is this applicable in your life?
- In v. 8, the psalm reads, "Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn." Because of the running and hiding from attackers and dangers, as any normal person would

be, David seems to have set aside his soul and his instruments from praising his God. But now, though his attackers are still pursuing him, he no longer wants to remain quiet. More than hiding and running, he wants his eyes opened, his heart lifted, to exalt his God through praise and prayer. Though nothing about his present situation seems to warrant it, yet David wants to sing and praise God for His love and faithfulness, that are beyond this world. When survival might teach that he should be quietly hiding, he wants to praise his God. When he should be running, he wants to take out his musical instruments to exalt his God. When he should be resting and sleeping, he wants to rise and offer himself to seek the nearness of his God. What a beautiful contradiction from the worldly ways is David. How beautiful it would be, if all God's people, if I, would also learn this contradictory ways of God while living in this world, even as we face the troubles of life. How I envy David for the ability to play these musical instruments to praise and exalt and sing to His God.

Ps 58 (1/23/24)

1. How far does wickedness goes and how is it described and why do you think that is; how are the righteous responding to the destruction of the wicked and why so; what do you learn?
 - A strong response by Christians can sometimes be misunderstood, and at times, thought to be inappropriate, such as we find in v. 10, "The righteous will be glad when they are avenged, when they dip their feet in the blood of the wicked." Surely, we, Christians, have received Christ's forgiveness when we were still sinners, which should also lead us to forgive others who have sinned against us. That should be our greatest response to any encounter with wickedness, because that's how Christ saved us while we were sinning against God. And as much as we want to delight to share Christ's forgiveness in us to others, the response of David in this psalm would not be entirely wrong either. There should be in us, a strong response of vengeance and hatred for the wickedness there is, especially when we have encountered them ourselves. So, in some sense, there should be a dual heart in us, that is, hatred for the wickedness we face, and yet, still have the joy of forgiving as we have been forgiven in Christ. Of course, without Christ, such joy could not exist. Praise His name!

Ps 59 (1/24/24)

1. What is Saul trying to do against David (1Sam 19:11-16); why does David want God to "rouse Himself"; why would David sing in the morning; what do you learn?
 - In v. 9, David says, "You are my strength, I watch for You." As Saul's men are watching for him, to do harm, David watches for God, to protect him. If David had his eyes solely on Saul's men, then David's heart will probably be stuck with what men can do, resulting in fear and bitterness for the evil meant for him. But, by God's grace, despite what was happening all around him, David was able to look up, to watch for God. And when God is in view, then with God our thoughts follow, and in Him, we can see His strength and thus His protection; we can see His love and therefore His companionship. Though strong men came to do harm, the God He sees is stronger, and so, He will not fear men but praise God for His strength. Oh, what blessing to be able to lift up our eyes to see our God when all around us is meant to harm us. May we also "watch for God," even when people and situations are lurking around us to harm.

Ps 60 (1/25/24)

1. From the introduction, who was David fighting against and why did it begin (1Chron 19); presently, what seems to be the situation for David and how is he interpreting the events from God's end; yet, to whom does David look for his help and why would he when he felt rejected; what do you learn?
- I was taken back in the way David opened this psalm. He sounds angry and demanding, telling God what He should do. But, he seems to find his bearing, so the words become more appropriate, as he pleads with God for His help. In some sense, I get it, because with David, victories and defeats are all attributed to God alone. Believing in God's sovereignty, David's only focus is on God alone. And I appreciate greatly that David will not look elsewhere but to God alone, even if it is to blame Him, though that would not be right. But, to look and trust in God alone is what I love most about David. Lord, may I also learn to look, to trust, and to love You most, for my heart "is prone to wander, and I feel it." Please, don't let me be as me. Please bless me to taste Your love more, so that You will fill and overflow in me.

Ps 61 (1/26/24)

1. How does David see God, thus what does he desire from God; how do you see your God and what do you desire from Him?
- Until v. 5, David speaks of himself in the first person. But, in vv. 6-7, David speaks of the king in the third person, as if he was speaking of someone else. David is the king, but he is spoken as a "he." Normally, when I hear an athlete speak of himself in the third person during an interview, it sounds arrogant. But, here with David, I don't believe he is trying to be arrogant. I believe David is speaking about protecting the king, not because he thought of himself as superior, but because he understood the kingship made himself more exalted than all the citizens because the place of the king for the nation was meant to be above. So, David is seeking protection from God, not merely as a child of God, but also because God has placed him above the nation as her king, and thus, the wellbeing of the king is paramount for the nation's wellbeing. David understood his position, and for the wellbeing of the nation, he wants to be well. David has learned to see and to live greater than one person, not for himself to be great, but to see His people as greater than himself. The same can be for God's people today. We don't live only for ourselves. We represent something and Someone far greater than ourselves. May we learn to reflect and display His greatness even through our own lives.

Ps 62 (1/27/24)

1. How does David describe God and how does his knowledge of God impact his life; how are the people's hearts and behaviors different towards David; what do the final verses say and what do you hear?
- In v. 10, we are told, "though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them." That's our tendency. We set our hearts on our riches and trust them to bring many good things, even long and happy life. In our world, and often in our hearts, we keep believing that riches solve life's troubles and issues. So, we live hard to accumulate as much riches we can, with savings and resources and even relationships that can work for us, that can protect us, as needed. For many ventures and even for retirement, our hearts feel far more confident when our riches increase. God knows who we are and what we like to do. So, again, He lovingly teaches us,

“though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.” Riches do not protect us from harm and pain; riches do not safeguard us from today’s and tomorrow’s troubles; riches do not determine the inheritance we will have in God’s eternal kingdom. Riches were meant to be used for God’s glory, and not for us to have our hearts set on them, to find our refuge on them. Riches can be thieves, stealing our hearts from placing them on God. In life, God should be our focus, but riches often blind us, distract us, mislead us, competes, challenges, lies to us, that our hearts should rest on it, rather than on God. May our God be our resting place. May our God be our refuge. And may riches become instruments to bless us to learn to trust in God alone and no where else, including in riches.

Ps 63 (1/29/24)

1. In v. 1, how does David describe what he wants and why in such ways; what has he tasted according to v. 3 and how does that impact his life in vv. 3-4; what does David want to do even throughout his sleep in v. 6; what do you learn?
 - When I was a young man, we used to sing a praise song based on Ps 63:3, Thy loving kindness is better than life.... How I pray that these words are true in our lives, God’s loving kindness (His love) will truly be better than life for us. Oh, how I pray that we will taste His goodness so abundantly, that we can truly believe and confess, nothing in life compares to the goodness that we can have in God. And when we taste Gods’ goodness, then our lips will praise and our hands will rise, because worshiping Him, not only during praise time on Sundays but throughout our lives on the weekdays, wherever we are, with whoever we are with, a life of worshiping the goodness of God will overflow in our deeds, in our words, in our faces, in our attitudes. Yes, may the goodness of God fill us inside and overflow to our lips and to our hands and to our feet.

Ps 64 (1/30/24)

1. How was David attacked and how would that look like; how would God rescue him; what are the two responses of God’s action in vv. 9-10; what do you learn?
 - From v. 3, we see, words are sharp like swords and cruel like deadly arrows. Unlike the temporary acts of the swords and arrows, words can linger for years and years, and still cut and harm us, after many years later, when the words spoken are long past, and yet, the sharpness can still cut us up. We know this pain well, because it still hurts. Of course, as painful as it is to us, we are very blind and numb to the pain we cause on others with our words. Our words have hurt others. It really is a double edge sword. So, let’s pray that our God will bless us to be humble and careful with our words, because it can harm others so greatly, for so long. And if we are still needing to be healed and recover from the harm of others, let’s pray that our God will heal us and to also bless us to “not keep a record of (their) wrong.” We need God’s blessing to be healed and to not cut others. Only God’s blessings will keep us safe and not become a harmful person to others with our words. Let’s pray for God’s blessing over words, those we speak and also those we hear.

Ps 65 (1/31/24)

1. What reasons does David give for praising God; to what extent does God care for His creation and why; what do you learn?

- In v. 3, we read, “When we were overwhelmed by sins, You forgave our transgressions.” When sins are overwhelming, then the wages of sin should be the result. When the terribleness of sin is overwhelming, then the consequences should be horrifying. But, rather than evil, oppression, guilt and terror, comes forgiveness for our transgressions. And this forgiveness comes from “You.” Because our God gives, there’s no condition for us to match, there’s no achievements to accomplish, there’s no good works to earn. Quite the contrary, God forgave because He knew our sins were overwhelming us, destroying us, and we were helpless against them. It makes complete sense why Jesus said, “I did not come for the righteous, but for sinners.” Yes, for sinners who were so overwhelmed in our sins, we had no hope, no help. But, You forgave our transgressions when we were not deserving, when we had no hope. What a kind and gracious Redeemer Jesus is; what a freeing Deliverer Jesus is; what a loving Savior Jesus is; what an amazing God Jesus is. Thank You! Please, Lord, may Your forgiveness overflow from us to those whose sins are still clinging in us.

Ps 66 (2/1/24)

1. What is David calling all the earth to do and how; what does David want the people to see and hear what his God did; what do you want the people around you to see and hear about what your God did; how can you best live what you want to do?
- In this psalm, I read the word “come” four times—come and see what God has done, come let us rejoice in Him, I will come to Your temple with burnt offerings, and come and hear what He has done. David is inviting other people to come, so they can see and hear what God has done, and in turn, rejoice and worship God, for what He has done. To me, this is a capsule of what the Christian life is. For us to see what God has done and find Him so glorious, that we will delight to invite the people around us to also see who our God is and join us in worshipping Him for who He is and for what He has done. That’s what our lives should be about, to see and to taste the goodness of our God, and to share them with others, so they can also taste God’s goodness and join us to worship our good God. So, let’s first come to God and taste His goodness. And then, let’s invite others to join us, so they also can taste His goodness. Then together, let’s praise and worship the goodness of our God.

Ps 67 (2/2/24)

1. Why and for whom does the psalmist want God’s graciousness; what does a good harvest mean for the psalmist; how do the good blessings in your life lead the people around you to praise our God?
- Matthew 5:16 reads, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Normally, when people see us do good deeds, they will compliment us. But as people who believe all the good things we have are received from God (Jam 1:17), the right thing to do is to turn the compliments for us to God and His goodness. When we simply accept the compliments, then we are deceiving people into thinking that it was “us” who are good. Moreover, we are robbing God of His glory, for we are being exalted and not our God who truly deserves it. So, like the psalmist today, let’s learn to turn everything good happening to us and around us, and lovingly lead the people into praising the God who is truly good and the Giver of His goodness. May everyone around us taste how good our God truly is, even through the good things happening to us.

Ps 68 (2/3/24)

1. Can you identify some of the specific ways God blesses His people in this psalm; where in the NT do we find v. 18 and what does it mean; in vv. 24-27, what do you see; what do you learn?
- We read v. 11, “The Lord announces the word, and the women who proclaim it are a mighty throng.” As we know, women were often the invisible, the unheard, and the unrecorded people even among God’s people. But, the Lord notices, the Lord sees. He records what they did and who they are, even in Jesus’ genealogy. And here, He hears their proclamation, not by a few, but by a mighty throng. How sweet and powerful and surprisingly it must have sounded, the mighty throng of the women proclaiming. As we know, this is not the only time, for the women sang and danced with Miriam leading and also when David returned victorious from defeating the Philistines (Ex 15:20-21; 1Sam 18:6-7). Yes, may the women in mighty throng sing and dance for God’s goodness. And may all the men and children also join to sing and dance for the goodness of our God.

Ps 69 (2/5/24)

1. How deep was David in trouble and how did the people around him respond; can you find the three references in the NT where and how these words were used (vv. 4, 9, 21); when almost everyone around him were against him, where did David look to and how and why; when life and people seem against you, where and how do you look to and why?
- In v. 6, while David is in deep agony, yet, he somehow is thinking of other believers that he may discourage because of what he is going through. That is simply amazing grace, to think of how he might be the cause of others stumbling. When in agony, we rarely are able to look anywhere but within, but David sees others and does not want them to be stumbled. That’s graciousness. Lord, only in You, are we able to look up and for others, so that what’s happening to me, will not cause others to fall. Oh Lord, faith in You, to walk with You, is so much greater than simply what’s happening to me. Lord, bless me (us) to see more of You, and to learn to live and walk more like You. May You increase, and I decrease.

Ps 70 (2/6/24)

1. What is David’s plea to God and why; what do they mean when they say “Aha! Aha!” and why would they do that; as for God’s people, what do they say and why; are you able to join the saying of God’s people here, even when you feel you are drowning fast; can you remember and share an incident like that in your life?
- I appreciate what’s going on in vv. 4 and 5. Under any and all circumstances, David wants to sing, “The Lord is great!” What a beautiful and God longing heart he has. But, as much as he wants to do so, he also finds life to be more trouble and difficult than he can handle. He knows he is not strong enough to overcome all and always do what’s right. So, he cries out in v. 5, “But as for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay.” In other words, he finds himself very weak, unable on his own to do what’s right, to praise his God under any and all circumstances. But, he wants to. So, he earnestly cries out and clings to God to help him and to bless him. That’s where I find myself often. Knowing what’s right, and yet feeling too weak to follow my Lord, I know I can do so

only if He blesses me, helps me. When we say, we can only persevere because He preserves us, is so true. Indeed, because He keeps us, we will continue our walk with Him. Thank You Lord, for always holding us tight, for holding us near, for always carrying us when we are not able walk on our own. Our God is more than able, what we are not able. PTL!

Ps 71 (2/7/24)

1. What are the enemies saying about the psalmist; in light of that, how does he respond; through all that he has experienced, what does he want most; can you relate to his action in the days of his trouble and what can you learn from him?
- In v. 9, the psalmist is pleading with God to not forsake him when he is old and weak. Why would he think that? Because that's what his enemies were saying, that God has forsaken him (vv. 10-11). As he hears these people, it makes sense because his life seems to be filled with troubles and bitterness (v. 20). So, if the happenings of life are the evidences of God's presence or forsakenness, then that would be the right conclusion. And this is where faith must take hold of us, because faith sees Him who is invisible. Faith is not shaped by what's happening, but by the object of our faith, and that is, the God who rules the universe. Faith is not knowing what the future holds, but knowing Who holds the future. Our faith lies and rests and trusts in Him, and not in it, the happenings. It is easy to get swept away by the happenings, and we must learn to not follow them, but to lift up our eyes and behold Him, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, the Savior and Lord, Christ Jesus. As we often say, the problem of our lives is not the presence of trouble in our lives, but the absence of Christ in the midst of our troubles, that's our true problem. May we always believe and trust that our Lord is always present, so that even when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will believe that our Good Shepherd's staff and rod are there to protect us, to guide us, to keep us near with Him, to walk with Him, even as we saw Enoch walk with his God for those 300 years. PTL! May not our happenings but our faith in Him rule and guide our hearts and steps.

Ps 72 (2/8/24)

1. What does the psalmist want God to do for the king and why; how should God's blessing overflow in the life of the king; what else do you notice about this psalm; what ministers to you most about this psalm?
- In vv. 12-15, I appreciate the two ways street. While the king will work and serve for the people's wellbeing, he asks the people to pray for him and seek his blessings. When a relationship is one sided, then it usually tires and does not end well. When there's a giving and receiving, then it becomes healthier. Even with God, though it is primarily one sided, as He is the Giver of all good things, yet, He does want a return. And the return is usually by appreciation, honor, and loving trust to Him more and more. So, I believe it is imperative that God's people learn to genuinely give "thanks" to our God and to each other. And as we receive good from others, let's not be satisfied with the goodness of receiving, but learn how to also give generously, joyfully, unconditionally as our God delights to give us. God is always the image we love and humbly pursue, praying that we would learn and delight to imitate, so that we can grow more like He, Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord, the Servant King.

Ps 73 (2/9/24)

1. What was the reason for the psalmist almost slipping and have you struggled with such thoughts; how was he able to overcome his struggle and have you also learned this lesson; what was his conclusion and does it resonate with you and how?
 - The psalmist was wrestling with the battle of sight versus faith. To see the prosperity of the wicked and to try to uphold the faith in the unseen world is confusing. It's natural to decide and determine what we see is conclusive. Unless our faith opens our hearts to see our invisible God and his unseen world, our sight will rule our lives. Even for the psalmist, if he was left to decide according to what he saw, what he felt, what he experienced, then as he admits, he would have fallen, and fallen hard. Only in God's sanctuary, only under God's truthful words, were his eyes opened to the world of the final destiny, where our sights cannot see. To see God's truth over what he saw with his experience changed everything for the psalmist. Similarly for Moses, when he saw "Him who is invisible" was he able to tear away from the treasures of Egypt and willingly choose to walk with God and His people, despite the hardship he would suffer for his choice of faith over sight (Heb 11:24-27). The key to our Christian faith is, do we also see Him who is invisible? Do you see Him? Or are the treasures of the world shining more brightly for you? Who or what we see matters most. I pray that we would truly see Him who is invisible. Yes, Lord, may we see You, even when our eyes cannot.

Ps 74 (2/10/24)

1. How dark and painful was the situation for God's people at the moment; from vv. 12-17, what does the psalmist remember about God and why did that matter; despite the situation not changing presently, how does the psalmist end this psalm and what can you learn?
 - At first, I was taken back with v. 1, "O God, why have You rejected us forever?" If that was the final conclusion, then there's nothing more to be said. They were done, lost forever. Though God's goodness was only a memory for the psalmist, and the sight of the present reality appeared as utterly hopeless, yet, he still clings on to his God to rise up and to defend them, because they are God's people. Though he says his and the people's lives are hopeless lost, yet, he won't make that the final conclusion. Though everything around him says, that he and God's people are doomed, yet, he won't give up. He will yet still look up to his God, and believe that He will rise up and raise them also. Indeed, that's where our hope is and will always be. When God rises, He raises us up also. And truth be told, God is never down, though it can appear like that to our eyes. And since God is never down, neither will we, though at times, we may have fallen, but He will always raise us. Yes, we can persevere because our God preserves us. Because He is strong, it's ok for us to be weak. Our job is to cling to Him, because we believe He will hold on to us tightly, never letting us go.

Ps 75 (2/12/24)

1. In vv. 2-5, what does God say for the people to learn; how does the psalmist respond to God's words spoken; can you share how you responded to God's word in your most recent memory (if you can, one you obeyed and another you disobeyed)?
 - A horn is a symbol of power and strength. God does not want the wicked to lift up their horns. God does not like defiance. He hates arrogance. God is displeased when people "did it my

way” because they think they are independent of their Creator. God delights to honor and exalt the horn of the righteousness. God delights to lift up His people because we look up to Him, as we lovingly and humbly depend on our Creator God, to be our strength and power. To be strong independent of God is arrogance and defiance. But, to be strong and powerful because we trust and rely on our God alone, in complete dependence, and therefore, our pleasure is to completely surrender, submit, and obey our God in love with joy, is where God’s heavenly strength comes, fills us, and overflows to those around us. Yes, may we be strong, not independent from God, but because we are completely and joyfully dependent only in God alone, as our strength and giver of our strength.

Ps 76 (2/13/24)

1. What does it mean that God’s dwelling place is in Zion and what does God do there; who are the people that God saves and why them; why would God’s wrath bring praise; are there anything else that strikes you in this psalm?
- Ultimately, in the end, not only God’s salvation will bring praise, but even His wrath will bring praise to God. When God pours His wrath on the sinners who sin, it will be clear that God’s justice is right; it’s fair; it’s uncorrupted; it holds accountable for each person’s deeds, words and thoughts. In God’s wrath, everyone who receives them will be receiving what they truly deserve. No one who does not deserve God’s wrath, will receive them. Actually, the only person who did not deserve God’s wrath did receive them, because He volunteered to receive the wrath that His enemies deserved. He chose to be our Substitute, precisely to receive what we really deserved, God’s wrath. This is so incredible and so humbling. We hate to receive the evil that we don’t deserve. We especially hate it more when we are receiving what our enemies deserved in their stead. I need to learn to be more quiet and less hurt and less complaining when I am receiving evil, insults, disrespect and ingratitude. My Lord did that for me. And as much as I love what He did for me, I don’t always seem to want to follow in His footsteps. Too often I act like a fan and not a follower of Jesus. Oh Lord, forgive me. Bless me to grow more like You, truly You. May I not be selective in my obedience before You, as I follow You. Bless me to grow in every way more like You, and not just in places I want.

Ps 77 (2/14/24)

1. In vv. 1-9, what is the psalmist remembering and meditating on and what was the result; in vv. 10-20, where has he turned his meditation to and how was that impacting him; your meditation and remembrance, where do they usually go to and how can they be better focused on God (see how you can apply Phil 4:4-9)?
- V. 19 reads, “Your path led through the sea, Your way through the mighty waters, though Your footprints were not seen.” To deliver His people out of the land of slavery, God indeed led His people through the mighty sea. God can walk over the water, but His people can’t. So, in order to deliver His people out, He parted the waters, so they could walk across the sea all the way to the other side. Yet, if we searched for His footprints, we will find no evidence. And if there’s no evidence of His footprints, does that prove that He was not there? Too often, I believe we, humans, look for the wrong evidence of God. We want to see His footprints on the same ground we walk, as a testimony of God’s presence. But, He leaves none. God’s evidence of His presence is not on the ground or on the waters. The evidence of His presence is in the lives of His people who crossed the sea, who sing of His mighty power for delivering us, whose lives are wonderfully transforming after the likeness of the amazing God who saved us so beautifully, to live holy lives, because He is holy. That’s the evidence of God’s presence in

us. His footprints is not on the waters, but it should be on us. In our lives, we should delight to follow Him, so that we would learn to live more like He, more obedient like His walk. Eventually, people will see our footprints leads to His, because we follow in His footsteps.

Ps 78 (2/15/24)

* This psalm is the second longest psalm, after Ps 119. It recounts Israel's history, intended to exhort God's people to not be like their forefathers. So, please, don't be in a rush to read this chapter today. Plan a little longer to read and meditate and learn.

1. There are many "but" and "yet" to this chapter that keeps turning the focus, what do you notice when you find them; which part of Israel's history can you best identify or learn from; how does this psalm end and why do you think that was and how does that impact you?
- This chapter moves from Ephraim to Judah, from Shiloh to Jerusalem. The solution to our wavering, to our repeated falling and failing, to our faithlessness and unfaithfulness is to turn to God, to seek His ways, to trust Him, and to follow the One He chose. The more we value our God, the better we will follow. The more we forget or ignore or get lost in this world, the more we wander and choose my way over His. May we truly follow Jesus and learn to confess, "Not my will but Yours be done." May we believe, God is true, and we are the liars.

Ps 79 (2/16/24)

1. How does Asaph present his plea for help to God and why would that matter; how does he want God to treat the enemy and why; though he and the people are guilty of their sins, how could he still seek God's forgiveness; what do you learn?
- Verse 10 reads, "Why should the nations say, 'Where is their God?'" The nations do not care for God, so why are they asking where God was? It is because God's people are known for our God, for we are His people. Without our God, we don't exist. Therefore, our identity and our reason for existence is found in being His people. And that's what God's people have proclaimed, that we are God's people. And though the nations do not believe in our God, when things are not going well for us, for them, it's proof that God is not here, or better yet, God does not exist. So, as God's people, when things are not going well for us, it's then we must be most careful, most intentional, most purposeful with our words and deeds (and with our faces and our attitudes), so that we do not prove the nations right with our unlike Christlikeness. It is through the tears, the pain and the difficulties, we must walk and speak in such a way that God is present with us through the tears and the pain. They don't know, but we know, Christ took up our cross, to be our Substitute. So, we must not let our tears blind us from God's nearness in us. He is here, for He is Immanuel. Remember, our real problem is not the presence of trouble (the pain, the things not going well), but the absence of Christ in the midst of our trouble. Let's not walk as if Christ was absent when things are not going well. Just like our Lord, even when the Father does not remove the cup from us, we will still love Him, we will still follow Him, we will still thank Him, we will remember that He is good, despite the bad things happening because of the sinfulness all around us. And if God should remove our troubles, if God should deliver us from the harm around us, then, let's lovingly tell the nations, how good our God is, how near He is, and how He delights to be ours and theirs Savior and Lord. So, let's pray for the nations and tell them that do not know, "Where God is."

Ps 80 (2/17/24)

1. What does Asaph want God to hear him about; why were they in such a state; have you ever experienced a broken wall in your life and why do you think that was; what do you learn from this psalm?
- As I read this psalm, I notice the words, “Hear us—Restore us—Restore us—Return to us—Restore us.” And they were all directed of course, to the Lord God Almighty. He and the people felt that God was not near, that God was not blessing them. And without God, they felt abandoned, doomed, lost, forgotten, so to God they cried out. To feel forsaken by God is a terrible feeling, but to cling to God despite all that seemed wrong, is a blessed place to be. To truly know and believe and act that God’s absence is our greatest trouble and problem, is a good place to be. May we love and delight to cling to our God in any and all situations, that being without Him, is the worst possible thing that can ever happen to us. Because of Jesus, may we know and believe, our God always hears us, return to us, and restores us, because He received the destruction of what our sins deserved, and clothed us with His righteousness, forever promising to be with us as our Immanuel.

Ps 81 (2/19/24)

1. What is God telling His people; of what He said, what strikes your heart most and why; how can you best obey what you heard?
- Despite the stubborn hearts of the people who kept refusing to listen and follow God’s words, yet God is still calling after them to “open wide your mouth and I will fill it.” We humans treat others as we have been treated. But with God, He treats us as we should treat others. The amazing difference I realize is, that while we respond in the way we have been treated, God initiates the action and blesses us with His ways first, so that we can respond to His ways and overflow them to others. So, we are still responding, but this time, we are responding to God’s way and not from others. To the others, our prayer is that we initiate God’s goodness because God has first poured it to us, to spread it to them. Instead of responding an eye for an eye with people, our prayer is to offer them what God has so graciously offered it to us first. So, the way people act towards us is not what should decide how we act, rather our prayer is God’s loving act to us will shape us to act to others as God has first treated us. That’s God’s people, God’s children, God’s fragrance, Christ-likeness. Oh Lord, we ask for Your blessing to live what You teach us.

Ps 82 (2/20/24)

(This psalm can be confusing. So, please read this short outline, to help you understand better God’s word.)

* Ps 82 is unusual in that God serves as the main speaker. It sets the scene with God taking His place in the divine council (v. 1). God then speaks and rebukes the gods as He commands them to act justly toward the weak and needy (vv. 2-4). The psalmist continues by describing the gods as ignorant (v. 5) before God again speaks and condemns them to die like men (vv. 6-7). The psalmist concludes by petitioning God to judge the earth (v. 8).

1. What does God say to the gods and why is that good; in our own lives, do God’s words here apply to you and how; what do you learn?

- In vv. 3-4, the first words of each sentences begin with—Defend, Uphold, Rescue, Deliver—the weak and the need from the wicked. As these words picture for us, we are not to be mere bystanders in this world, nor just be a fan and encouragers. We are to participate, get involved, get our hands dirty for their cause, to fight, to sacrifice as needed, in order to deliver them from the wicked. It's easy to make comments from the sidelines or to offer counsel safely away from the mess. But, the picture of defending, upholding, rescuing and delivering means to get a lot more involved, it means to get into the mess, just as our God entered into our mess, into our sins, into our misery, even into our wrath, so that He will receive what we deserved, covering us, delivering us, to transform us ultimately to be what we were meant to be when we were first created, in the image of the Triune God. Yes, God's image and God's glory was meant for the people He created after their likeness. Oh Lord, may we pray and delight to grow after Your creation intention and not into the images we keep thinking we should be.

Ps 83 (2/21/24)

1. Who are the many people that are plotting against God's people and why would they; what specific examples does Asaph remember in how God dealt with the enemy and how did that impact Asaph's heart; yet, what does he ultimately want for the enemies; what do you learn?
- Verse 16 reads, "Cover their faces with shame, Lord, so that they will seek Your name." After reading the first half of this verse, I expected to hear the desire for the inevitable destruction of the enemies. But, from shame, Asaph ultimately wants the enemy to also seek God and know that God alone is the Most High in v. 18. When the enemies have been bad, we usually want their destruction to be the end. But, Asaph, wants something more, for he wants even his enemies to know God. More than the satisfaction of the destruction of the enemy, Asaph wants God to be exalted and glorified. What a heart, what an order, how precious is his priority, to place God above his pain, his hurt, his satisfaction. I see a glimpse of God being his first love. Lord, bless us to taste this order, because we also want You to be our first love, above our pain, above our hurt, above our satisfaction.

Ps 84 (2/22/24)

1. Where is the most lovely dwelling place for the psalmist and why would that be; how true is that for you and why; what else do you catch from this psalm?
- Verse 5 reads, "Blessed are those whose strength is in You, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage." We live at a time where we say a lot of wonderful confessions, through praises, prayer and testimonies and sharing, but many times our actions do not align with our words. James has taught us, faith without deeds is dead; that is, words without actions is cheap. In light of that, the sons of Korah, not only say God is their strength, but they make the pilgrimage to God's temple, where their God tabernacles, so that their words and deeds match, where their confession finds their actions in their walk. Talk and walk goes hand in hand in their pilgrimage. Let's learn well what our talk is, so that we may be able to walk well displaying our confession.

Ps 85 (2/23/24)

1. What does the psalmist say to God and how does that resonate with you; what meetings and kissings does the psalmist want and how do you think that would look like in your life; what do you learn?

- The start of each verses in 1-3, “You” immediately caught my attention. The psalmist is speaking to God directly. He wasn’t talking about God in the third person, but directly to You. It means, he knows that God is listening to him, and he is talking to Him directly. No mediators, no translators, no assistance from others, it’s going to be just him and God; it’s just going to be me and God, from me to You. May we always see and believe our God is not just near, but here with us. We can and should speak to Him and with Him directly. Many times, we can speak to Him, as if He was not there listening to everything we say to Him. I pray that we can all speak to our God, directly to “You”, and know He is here, He is listening, and we are dialoguing as if we were sitting together, face to face. Thank You, our Immanuel God, for You are always here, You are.

Ps 86 (2/24/24)

1. Why does David keep calling to God; will you describe the many different ways David sees God; as he closes this psalm, why does David want God to give him a sign of His goodness; what do you learn?

- In v. 16, David makes a reference to his mother’s faith, through her servant heart. I don’t recall David speaking of his mother and her faith anywhere (I could be wrong here). I love when a son learns from his mother (and father), and just like her, serves God. What a beautiful way to learn to serve our God, through the way the children have seen their parents. Many times, we learn best, not when we are simply taught, but when we catch the truth. Words and deeds, instructions and examples, reading and obedience, the two shall kiss and walk holding hands together. May the two always be as one in our lives.

Ps 87 (2/26/24)

1. What exactly is Zion and why was it important for God and His people; why would Zion be important for you and how should it impact your life?

- This psalm ends with, “All My fountains are in you (Zion).” We know God is the Giver of all good things, all blessings (Jam 1:17). God alone is the true fountain of life. But, the way God designed for His fountain to flow is through Zion, His people. Though God can speak directly to all people of His gospel, yet He won’t because He wants to speak through His people. God can pour His love straight from heaven to all people, yet He won’t because He wants His people to be His heart, His hands, His feet, His comfort, always thankfully pointing to everyone, that He is the true Giver of all good things (Matt 5:16). Let’s learn well, just as God uses us to be His instrument of blessing to those around us, it is our job to always point to others, that God is truly the only fountain of blessings that everyone must keep their focus on. It’s not us, but it is He who gives us so that we can share them with others. God blesses us by using us as His instrument, and we honor Him by pointing to Him for all good things, so that He alone will receive the glory. Isn’t that awesome? He blesses us and we glorify Him, that’s our relationship with our wonderful God.

Ps 88 (2/27/24)

1. How is God the ultimate source of his trouble and also the ultimate source of his solution; are there anything particular you notice in this psalm; what do you learn?
- Most of the psalms conclude with hope, in spite of however many and deep their troubles are. But two psalms end without such hope, Ps 39 and 88. Please read their last words, the final verses. How painful, how difficult, and how terrible they must have felt that they could not find hope, as they came to their conclusion. But, that seems to go against our Christian faith, doesn't it? No matter how deep our troubles and how dark our situation, because we believe in the almighty God, who can make the impossible possible, there's always hope for God's people. Yet, here, we find none. And this is in God's word. Why? Let's remember, what this book, the Psalms, is about. They are prayers and praises from His people, God's children. And when hurt children speak with our Father, sometimes, from our end, everything seems hopelessly dark. Furthermore, in God's infinite wisdom, He blesses these two psalms that end in the darkness to be part of His inspired and living word. Though there's always hope in Him, our God knows, that His children cannot always see that. So, He allows these struggles, not because that is how our lives end, but so that, we can see, even when God seems absent, that is not true, for our God is Immanuel, He will never leave us, never forsake us, never be absent from us, though we might not always feel Him or see Him. So, the more we see life from our end, the more hopeless darkness we will encounter. But, on the other hand, the more we learn to see life from God's end, the more of His light and hope we will find, even under the darkest of days.

Ps 89 (2/28/24)

1. In vv. 1-29, what characteristics of God does the psalmist write; in vv. 30-37, what are God's people to learn; in vv. 38-52, what is the present reality for them and how can you reconcile with the earlier verses of this psalm; what do you learn?
- In the last portion of this psalm, vv. 38-51, we see life for God's people was difficult, terrible, unbearable. God seemed to have forsaken them, and the enemies were surely having their way. The troubles were real and very painful. But the final verse, v. 52, enters and end quite abruptly, simply declaring, "Praise be to the Lord forever! Amen and Amen." The verses preceding the final verse makes it clear, there was nothing to praise God about, nothing to be happy about, nothing to be thankful about in the lives of God's people. Everything that could go wrong, was going terribly wrong. And yet, without an explanation, abruptly and simply, the psalmist says, "Praise be to the Lord forever!" And if he needed someone to agree with him, he agrees with himself, declaring, "Amen and Amen." What a way to see and express life. Remembering what God has promised in the earlier verses, and despite the terrible present situation, the final words of this man was, "Praise be to the Lord forever." And, if I could, I want to send him and say, "Amen and Amen." I really want to learn to close my life in whatever the situation I may be, sing, "Praise be to the Lord forever." And if there's no one there with me to affirm, I will also sing, "Amen and Amen." Thank You Lord for such an incredible closure.

Ps 90 (2/29/24)

1. Who is the writer of this psalm and why was he significant; how does he describe who God is; why was God angry; what do you learn?

- In v. 11, the psalmist speaks about the fear of God. Just as God's love for us is greater than any other love in this world, likewise, the fear of God would be greater than any other fears we can have in this world. Why? Because, the end of all the other fears end when life ends in death. But the reason why the fear of God is greater is because it doesn't end with our death, but God has the power to throw us into the everlasting fire that has no end. As much as we hate for the world and the devil to be our enemies, the most frightening enemy for anyone is actually God, for He alone has the power and the authority to send a person or even an angel to the everlasting fire in hell. So, if we have fear of the devil or anyone whom we might think it's frightening, we have not understood properly who has the greatest power to send us to the worst eternity, and that's not the devil but God Himself. Let's not become God's enemy. Let's not foolishly think because our God forgives that it's ok for us to sin. Did you know, God's true enemy is sin, the sins we say and do and think and imagine. Sin is God's greatest enemy. And when we sin, we are standing with God's enemy against Him. If only we understood what a frightening place we are standing. And as much as God hates sin and will pour His wrath on sin for eternally, God's love for His Son is even greater than His hate for sin. And sinners, like us, who are embraced by Jesus' loving salvation, then God's wrath pour out for sinners cannot touch us even with a drop, not a drop of God's wrath for sinners who are completely guilty of our sins, all because Jesus covered us with His loving righteousness completely over us. Jesus is the only reason for love, in the midst of hatred and fear.

Ps 91 (3/1/24)

1. What is God wanting to hear from His people and why and what does it really mean (vv. 2, 9); in what ways will God hold and protect His people; which ways of God do you desire and need most?
- The picture I have of v. 7 is, literally everyone around me are falling because of their sins, yet I am the last man standing. And what's embarrassing and fearful and thankful is that I know I am just as guilty as those who have fallen. I am no different, so I should receive no different judgment, and yet, here I am, still standing. And I know, without a shadow of doubt, I am standing not because I did well, but because my Savior and Lord and the Lover of my soul, Jesus Christ, took up all of my sins, and then took the pleasure to cover me with His righteousness, which has no blemish, no stain, no holes, it's not a see-through, nothing, absolutely nothing can penetrate the Shield that He is over me, over each one of His people. I stand not on my achievement, I stand not because I deserve it, I stand not because I am different than they, I stand only because Jesus upholds me, and on Him, I stand and truly know, I won't be judged because He already received the judgment for me. To save me, He fell. To make me stand upright, He fell. Because He fell, I stand. Oh Father, please bless my heart to desire to stand only with my Redeemer, and never for my ways. I have lived too long being me. Lord, I earnestly pray for Your blessing, so I can live more like You, Jesus.

Ps 92 (3/2/24)

1. When is this psalm to be sung and what is the psalmist singing about and why do you think they sang on that day; is there anything that catches your heart; how can you better live this day like the psalmist?
- In v. 10, we read, "... fine oils have been poured on me." The anointing of oil is usually reserved for three types of people in the OT, the King, the priest and the prophet, chosen to serve our God in a specific way. But here in our psalm, all the worshipers on the sabbath seem to be receiving this fine oil. How special and precious is our worship on the sabbath day

that our God would also pour His oil on His worshipers on the Lord's Day. As much as worship is meant to bless the worshipers, it brings a great pleasure and delight to our God, who receives the worship. In some sense, we can say, evangelism and missions is about finding and inviting the people who did not worship our God to join us to worship His beauty. Moreover, heaven can also be described as joining all the worshipers for all eternity, for our God is truly worthy to receive the most wholehearted and loving worship His worshipers can ever bring. Worship on the sabbath day, on the Lord's Day, is our special privilege and God's pleasure and delight. Oh Lord, thank You for pouring fine oils on us.

Ps 93 (3/4/24)

1. What does it mean that the Lord reigns; why would God be comparing Himself with the water/sea; what are God's statutes and why would that adorn God's house with holiness; what do you learn?
- This psalm ends with, "Your statutes, Lord, stand firm; holiness adorns Your house for endless days." When God's people learn and obey to stand firm in His words, then the result is a lifestyle of holiness that adorns our lives for all eternity. When we stand firmly in God's word, then the ugliness of sin and the world cannot stain or mangle the beauty of God's holiness shining in us. Holiness means to be set apart from sin and the world as well as to be clothed with Christ's righteousness, and when we live in that truth, then nothing but God's beautiful holiness will shine brightly from everlasting to everlasting. Yet, the beauty of God's holiness and righteousness are never earned with our good lifestyle, but humbly accepted by faith, for what Jesus did on the cross for us, that is, He died on the cross for our sins and paid all the debt of our sins completely. And so, in His resurrection, He also raises us, so that we can live a new life, a people who are forever justified from all of our guilty sinfulness. God is truly good, and His love endures forever.

Ps 94 (3/5/24)

1. What kind of God is God to the unbelievers and how is God different for His people; can you describe what kind of God you believe?
- In the midst of lots of pain and uncertainty and judgment, right smack in the middle, in v. 12, the psalmist wrote, "Blessed is the one You discipline, Lord, the one You teach from Your law." God's judgment for the unbelievers is punishment for their unbelief. However, for His people, God's rod is not a punishment, but a discipline that is clearly meant to be a blessing, despite the pain, because God's truthful law straightens out what is crooked, and when crooked and twisted things are to be straighten, they must be bent into the right shape, which hurts. But through this pain, the crooked and twisted gets straighten, which is why it is a blessing. Though in God's grace, He accepts sinners as we are, yet, He will not leave the sinner in our sin, but He will always cleanse us and straighten us, and that is not without a cost, because the way to cleanse a dirty sinner, the righteous Lamb of God had to be sacrificed. It is by Jesus shedding His blood that our sins were wiped clean. It is in the offering of His righteous life that our crooked and twisted and confused and lies filled lives get straightened out. So, when God disciplines His people, it is a blessing, though temporarily it will be painful, because we have fallen into a sinful lifestyle that is contrary to His truthful ways and He will graciously straighten out for us what we messed up.

Ps 95 (3/6/24)

1. To where does the psalmist invite us to and why; how does God see the people who hear His voice and do not obey; worship and obedience, how are you striving to do them better and earnestly pray for them?
- The first word of this psalm is an invitation to Come. I am invited to come to sing and to shout to the Rock of our salvation. Because our God is great, we are invited to come into God's presence with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song. Without knowing our situation, without knowing how difficult, how painful, how much we are struggling in our everyday lives, the invitation is still the same, Come to worship our God with thanksgiving. The invitation to come and worship our God is not dependent on how well or how terribly we are doing. Whatever our state is, both good and bad, the invitation does not change, Come. The only warning is, "Today, if only you would hear His voice, do not harden your hearts..." Again, the warning is not only for the people who are doing well, but for all the people, including the people who might be inclined to not listen and obey, for whatever the reason they might think they have for not obeying. Just as there are blessings and grace in our obedience to God's word, in disobedience, there's the hardening of our hearts. And when we disobey, for a short time, we will experience the anger of His displeasure because He will discipline His children in love for our good and for His glory.

Ps 96 (3/7/24)

1. What are the many ways the psalmist is calling God's people to do; who else is the psalmist calling to do what His people will do and why; of all the psalmist said, what are some of the things that you will like to see more in your life?
- Reading this psalm, the first thing that caught my eyes are the active words first spoken at the start of many of the verses—sing, proclaim, declare, ascribe, bring, worship, tremble, say. The grace God delights to pour unto His people, are meant for His people to respond back to God with a praise. All good things and blessings always begin with God, but as we receive them, God's design is for us to respond with praises and thanksgiving and to learn to grow into His likeness. That is why, as He first loved us, He desires for us to love others as He did to us. The same is true for forgiveness, kindness, gentleness, compassion, and all of His wonderful ways He showers us, we are to first taste them, and respond by learning to do likewise for others, just as He did for us, while we were not deserving any such blessings. God's way is always meant to overflow, to us first from God and from us unto others (1Jn 4:19; 2Cor 1:3-4).

Ps 97 (3/8/24)

1. What are the two foundational characters of God's throne and why; when we love the Lord, what will we hate and why and how would this look like in your life?
- This psalm begins, "The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad." As true as this would be for God's people, for a non-believer, the Lord reigning will bring much fear and sorrow for them. If the Lord's reign ultimately rules over all, then it means, what they desire, everything they worked for will not only be in vain, but it will be reasons for them to receive God's wrath. That's the end result of all the people in our world today who will not submit under God's throne. So, the response of joy or fear is determined by under whose throne we have surrendered our lives. So, let's find joy in something bigger than what's simply happening in our lives today, and see

the Lord reigns. And for the people we know who will not humbly submit before God's throne, may we not envy them for their treasures today, but pity them for what the holy God will judge over them for their unrighteousness.

Ps 98 (3/9/24)

1. How does God's right hand and His holy arm work salvation for us; how are God's people and His creation to respond to God's work; how does your life reflect the respond that God's people should offer to God; what else do you learn?
- In v. 8, we read, "Let the rivers clap their hands." Besides the river, the mountains, the sea and the world are all to "sing together for joy." What a picture this is. We usually do not think of these creations having any voices to sing, much less hands to clap. Invisible to our eyes, but they know they are to sing together for joy before their Creator. How wonderful it would be if I also knew to sing for joy to our Creator, even when everyone around us do not think we have anything to offer to our God. I pray I can join the rivers clapping their hands for joy to our God and Maker.

Ps 99 (3/11/24)

1. Why would the Lord's reign cause the nations to tremble; how can God be forgiving and also punishing the misdeeds of His people (v. 8); what do you learn?
- In v. 6, it says that both Moses and Aaron were among His priests. Technically, it was only Aaron who was a priest, and not Moses. Though Moses never received the official title of a priest, he surely did the work of the priest, as he always interceded for the people and relayed God's ways to the people. This makes me think that God sees our lives, how we live, and our lifestyle displays who we are, and not the title we may carry, including pastors, elders, leaders, parents, among others. So, the question is, does my life display who I say I am, and my greatest identity is a child of God, a Christian? Does my lifestyle display a true Christian identity?

Ps 100 (3/12/24)

1. How are God's people called to praise God and why; how can you better follow the example here and will you explain why you should; what and how will you implement in your daily life and in the corporate worship on the Lord's Day?
- The psalm is filled with shouts and gladness and joyful songs for God. I love the wholeheartedness of the worshiper worshiping our God. And, right in the middle of this short psalm, we read, "Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture." All these joyful praises arises from one truthful fact, and that is, because we know the Lord is God, our God, which makes us His people, His sheep. He made us, so we are His. He created us, so we are His. He saved us, so we are His. He is our Father and our Bridegroom, so we are His. We are His, that's the fact. That's our identity, both in this life and in eternity. We are His. And as His, I want to shout and sing with gladness, with thanksgiving, with love overflowing from every part of me for Him and to Him. I am His because He is my God!

Ps 101 (3/13/24)

1. What is David fighting hard against; which are things do you need to fight hard against, as you learn from David; whom does David want to dwell with and why?
 - I love and am envious of David's passion to fight against the sinfulness he sees, both in others and in himself. Though all of our sins are already forgiven in Christ, and yet, the sinful practices still persist in us, and at times, seems overwhelming over us, as we easily surrender ourselves to them. Sin is powerful. And truth be told, we are no match against it, if we fought it with only our own strength. So, it is truly amazing to realize that the battle we engage against our sinful ways, we are actually fighting from already a victory won for us by Christ. But, because we keep falling into it, as Paul would say, the good I want to do I don't, and the evil I don't want to, I do, is what we see happening in our own lives also. But as often as we fall, and as badly as we may fall, still the fighting against our sinfulness is truly and ultimately over because Christ who knew no sin became sin for us, and we no longer are indebted to sin, for our debt to sin was completely and perfectly paid for Christ, our Substitute. So, even when we fall into our sinful practices, we are not falling into sin's debt. However, as often as we fall, we must understand and resolve to not succumb to sin's temptation, because Jesus, our Savior and Lord, had completely cleansed us from sin's everlasting destiny, and call us to be holy as He is holy. Holiness is the new life Christ purchased for us. So, to live beautifully in God's holiness, we need to learn to battle against the sinful ways we see all around us, even in us.

Ps 102 (3/14/24)

1. What are some of the ways the psalmist describes his afflictions and which ones can you identify with; from vv. 12-23, how are some of the ways God is described; what do you learn about your God and how should that impact your life?
 - In v. 18, the psalmist wants the future generation he will probably never meet, to know the greatness of his God and praise Him. Though the psalmist is writing this psalm in the midst of great afflictions, yet what he wants for all the future generation is to know the greatness of God and praise Him. When I am suffering greatly, I want others to hear how great my suffering is. Oh Lord, I repent. Let it not be my suffering others hear, but your greatness through me, so they can praise our God. May Your greatness and Your praise be my greatest satisfaction and joy.

Ps 103 (3/15/24)

1. Will you list everyone and everything David is calling to praise the Lord; will you also list all the benefits that we should not forget in the Lord; what do you want most in your life from this psalm?
 - David opens this psalm, "Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name." It wasn't enough for him to sing with all of his heart and mind and strength. He wanted all his inmost being to praise the Lord, from his brain and imagination and thoughts, to his heart and blood streams, to his lungs, to his organs, to his bones and joints and pores, to his hands and feet and nails and hairs, and everything else within him. Oh, how completely immersed he was in his God. Oh, Father, I pray that Nadia and I and our church family will love, love, love, to be completely immersed in Your love, in Your grace, in our praise to You, with everything within and with everything we are and we have. All our inmost beings, praise His holy name!

Ps 104 (3/16/24)

1. As you read and meditate on this psalm, can you list some of God's work you find here; which ones ministers to you and why; are there anything else you learned?

- In v. 16, we read, "The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that He planted." In this verse, I see God's creation, His provision, His care, His ways. When the Lord creates and plants the trees, they were never meant to grow alone. It was meant to grow through God's provision of the water the trees need to grow, thus the Lord waters the trees well. The ways of God with the trees is the way He also deals with His people. As He plants us in this earth, it is He who waters us well, so that we can grow tall and strong and well. It is always God's way to create and to provide and to care for us well; that's who God is and that's what God always does. He who creates, provides. Moreover, He who began a good work in us will always complete. And, for what He demands, He will always supply. And most importantly, He who called us, will justify us. And He who justified us, will sanctify us. And He who sanctified us, will complete His beautiful work and glorify us. And in that glory, we will dwell and rejoice for all eternity. God's way is truly remarkable and amazing from the beginning to the very complete, perfect and glorious end, which has no end.

Ps 105 (3/18/24)

1. The word "remember" is given to us three times in vv. 5, 8 and 42, how are they used differently; how are the stories of Joseph and Moses told; why did everything happened according to the conclusion in v. 45; what do you learn?

- In vv. 1-2, we see the differences of how we come to God and before the people. To God, we sing and praise His name, and to the people, we tell them the wonderful acts of our God rejoicing. At times, in our lives, we flipped them around, don't we? Instead of rejoicing the wonders of God and telling them to others and even unto ourselves, we are often drunk with the success or talents of people, and we are busy raising them up. And sadly, too often, our singing and praising to God is done more like an event, like during the praise time in our worship service. Rarely do we truly sing to Him, except during our designated praise time, and even more rarely do we truly praise Him enough with the lifestyle that praises His name. It is my prayer that we will capture a life that truly sing and praises our God, both in our worship and in our lives daily, and the telling we do with people will always be about the wonderful acts of our amazing God. May we offer our praise to our God and may we praise our God to the people around us, so they can also join us in our praises to Him.

Ps 106 (3/19/24)

1. As the psalmist confesses that our ancestors sinned, which ones of Israel's sinful past is he recollecting; despite God's deliverance, how did the people sinned again before God; are there anything in this psalm that catches your eye?

- In v. 43, God's word says, "Many times He delivered them, but they were bent on rebellion and they wasted away in their sin." Not once, but many times, God delivered His people. But the people's response and lifestyle was, "bent on rebellion", that is, they were prone to sinfulness. They kept going after their sin. And sin brings consequences, for in sin, "they wasted away." Our sins were completely paid for, washed, cleansed from us, forgiven of every single sin we ever committed and will ever commit. None can stick to us. In Jesus' death and resurrection,

our sins can no longer cling to us. Praise the Lord! Sadly, while we live in this world, though God has cleansed us from all of our sins, yet, there remains a tendency within us, “bent on rebellion.” We keep walking into our sin, though we are no longer bound and shackled by them, as we were once used to, before Jesus’ cleansing over us. And though the punishment over our sins are already paid for by Jesus, yet, we will experience, not the punishment of our sins but the loving discipline of our holy God over our sins, by withholding fruitfulness over our lives, to teach us that sin should not be part of our lives. All of us struggle with our sinful ways. Let’s understand, if left to ourselves, we are “bent on rebellion.” So, let’s earnestly pray that our greatest love and desire and joy and excitement is to seek God’s holiness, Christ-likeness, and not fall again into our sinful ways (whether be with our deeds, thoughts, words, habits, hobbies, memories, feelings, pity, shame, people). May our God be our first and greatest love and may we delight in our first love more than anything or anyone or any experiences or memories or desires or longings.

Ps 107 (3/20/24)

1. Four times (vv. 6, 13, 19, 28), the psalmist says they were in trouble, what were their troubles and how did God respond; what is the psalmist response to God (vv. 8, 15, 21, 31); what do you learn?
- In the final verse of this psalm, he instructs God’s people to heed and ponder God’s loving deeds. As thankful and joyful we ought to be to experience God’s goodness, we are not to stop there. We are to heed and ponder God’s loving ways more. God’s people are called to meditate on God’s goodness. We are called to remember and not to forget God’s truth. When life’s troubles come, we are called to think about God’s goodness, and learn to fight the troubles with God’s goodness, that His love is unfailing, that He is good always to us. The troubles of our lives cannot have the final say to the happenings of our lives. We must learn to think and examine and conclude under God’s goodness over us, for He is good and His love endures forever.

Ps 108 (3/21/24)

1. How does David open this psalm; what does David plead with God and why; what do you learn?
- The way David opens this psalm is wonderful, as he claims that his heart is steadfast, unmoving and unchanging towards his God. And he will praise and make music to his God even at dawn. Trying to lead praise these last few months, I understand it’s no small task to sing and praise God early in the morning. The vocal cords are barely opened and I can’t reach the high notes, yet. So, I am appreciating David’s heart to sing and make music to God anytime of the day, especially at dawn. So, I love and appreciate David’s heart to sing, even when his vocal cords are not ready. His heart is bigger than his mouth. Oh Lord, I pray that my heart’s desire to sing and praise You will be bigger than my mouth, than anything in my life.

Ps 109 (3/22/24)

1. What are David’s enemies saying and why; what does David want to do with his words and why; how is God revealed in this psalm; what do you learn?
- In v. 4, David says, “In return for my friendship they accuse me, but I am a man of prayer.” Instead of returning their evil with evil, David says, I am a man of prayer. In other words,

instead of speaking out in evil like his enemies, he is taking it up to his God and laying down His burden and troubles at the feet of his God in his prayer. David does not take control of his life, but he lays it down before his God, for God to bless him, for God to do His will, not his. What an awesome perspective. Because he is a man of prayer, he will not fight people as they are, but he will pray. He will not return evil with evil, but he will pray. He is a man of prayer. Oh, Lord, I pray that I too will learn to be a man of prayer. May all my brothers and sisters also learn, that we are a people of prayer. We are a house of prayer. Prayer is what we do in all and every and any situation and circumstances and troubles we face. We pray, not just because we have to, we always should, but because that's who we are, a people of prayer.

Ps 110 (3/23/24)

1. In vv. 1 and 4, they are quoted in the NT, can you find where and how they were used; what do you learn from this psalm?
 - We meet the King, who is also a priest. Usually, a king in this world is a tyrant, usually using his power for his own good. But, the King we meet is also a priest. And as a priest, his job is to intercede on behalf of his people to his God. As a king, he has the authority to rule, but as a priest, his job is to serve the people for their wellbeing. Our Lord came as a King and a Priest, for He was the Servant King, who came to serve His people, who placed His people's wellbeing first. Titles are important, because they teach us who they are and what they are called to do. And our King-Priest, rules our lives sovereignly for our good, because His heart is to serve His people. Thank You our Lord Jesus, for being our King and our Priest.

Ps 111 (3/25/24)

1. What specific ways does the Psalmist praise God and which characters/ways of God do you love and want to learn and grow more; according to God, which kind of people have a good understanding and why do you think that is (v. 10); what do you learn?
 - This psalm simply opens with a command/declaration/desire, and that is, "Praise the Lord. I will extol the Lord with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly." Praising God is not simply a duty or responsibility or a simple act he may just casually do for any good reason. He truly wants to praise His God with all his heart, whether be alone or with an assembly of other people. He wants all of his heart be part of his praise for his God. That's what I pray for my heart and the hearts of all of my loved ones, to praise, to extol, to adore, to shout, or to whisper with all of our hearts as we praise our Lord. May we truly learn to praise our God with all of our hearts, as He is worthy to receive such praises.

Ps 112 (3/26/24)

1. According to v. 1, how does God describe a blessed person and how can you better live accordingly; from v. 7, why would God's people not fear bad news and how can you also learn to live likewise; what other truths captures your heart in this psalm?
 - In v. 4, it reads, "Even in darkness light dawns for the upright..." It is easy to read this psalm as if the blessings come conditionally, that is, when God's people do the good things, i.e., be gracious, compassionate, generous, then we will not be shaken. If that's the case, then that would not be Christianity. We Christians never earn God's goodness. We don't merit God's grace. God's gifts are just that, His gifts to a people who did not merit, who are not deserving.

(For the good deeds we should do, let me summarize it with a sentence for now. “Our good deeds are not a prescription to our faith but a description of our faith.”) So, the reason why the first phrase of v. 4 caught my attention was, because there’s no light in darkness; that’s why it’s called darkness. But there’s only one way a light can exist in total darkness is because the Maker of the light, that is, the Light of the world enters into the darkness and brings in the light. So, when we see our God, then we can see a light dawning in the darkness. And the upright who see the light, are seeing our God, who is in our midst. When God does not appear to be present, then darkness is all we see. But for God’s people, for the upright, because our God has covered us with His righteousness, no matter how dark, no matter how evil, no matter how chaotic and restless the troubles of the world may come, when we see Him, then we see Him who is invisible, and we can see when Christ is present then there’s no darkness that can hide His presence, His goodness. In His light, we can walk even in a dark world.

Ps 113 (3/27/24)

1. What reasons does the Psalmist give for his praises; can you share your reasons for your praises to our God; from your praises, can you share one or two reasons how God has truly ministered and transformed your life?
- In v. 6, our exalted God “stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth.” Not just the earth, but even heaven is low, very low to our majestic God. Oh Lord, bless us to see and understand how high, how much higher You are and how much more we should want to exalt You. Too often Lord, we just keep bringing You down, because in our selfishness, we want You near us, not understanding how much higher we ought to exalt You. Oh Lord, I see how we want to bring You down for our own comfort, but You raise us, exalt us, so that we can sit with the princes of Your kingdom. Oh Lord, I see You want to raise us, when we are wanting to lower You. Your ways is so much higher, so much more glorious. Praise You, Lord! Thank You!

Ps 114 (3/28/24)

1. Can you find the three exact chapters of these events (vv. 3 & 8); as you meditate on these events, will you describe your God; what do you learn?
- In v. 3, it reads, “The sea looked and fled...” The sea looked and saw the presence of the Lord, and she fled because she knew she was not worthy to stand in His presence. Oh, to know who God is and who we are, like the sea, would right all the wrongs, all the twists, all the lies, all the ugly foolishness that runs rampant in our world, even in our own minds and lives. To know who God is and in light of Him, see who we are, will truly humble all of us, would truly cause all of us to bow and worship His majesty, would bless us to joyfully delight to serve and obey and follow only Him alone. Oh Lord, we pray, bless us with eyes to see like the sea, who You are and in light of You, see ourselves, so that we would learn to respond and live our lives that would gladly exalt only You in all that we do and say.

Ps 115 (3/29/24)

1. How are God and idols different; what happens to the idol worshipers (v. 8) and can you describe what that may look like; what does God desire from His people and how would that look like in your life?
- This psalm opens with the confession, “Not to us, Lord, not to us but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness.” The Psalmist does not want the glory be his, but

to our God, because it is He who showered him with His love and faithfulness. Having tasted God's goodness, the Psalmist greater desire is not for him to be exalted, but to see his God receive all the glory, even those that may come his way. John the Baptist had a similar heart, as he confessed, "He must become greater; I must become less" (Jn 3:30). Jesus taught us, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt 5:16). In our lives, because we know we are small and weak, we often crave the glory, because it seems to validate us, it seems to exalt us, it makes us feel good of ourselves. But, I pray for God's humility and grace over our hearts. Oh, Father, may we learn to genuinely and humbly confess with the Psalmist today, "Not to us, Lord, not to us but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness."

Ps 116 (3/30/24)

1. Why is the Psalmist so eager to pray and how can you better learn from his example; how does he desire to respond to God (vv. 12-14) and can you respond like he and how would that look; are there any other verses that catches your eye and why?
 - In v. 15, we read, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His faithful servants." Most of us are afraid of death; we want to avoid it and prolong it as long as we can. We feel like that because death is an end to us, and endings without the certainty of a new beginning frightens us. So, as we live in this world, most of us pursue our health and protection and safety greatly because it's a fight against death, against the end for us. But, our good God gives us a new vision, a new insight, a new perspective on death, for He says, it is precious for His people. God sees our death as opening a new door, a new and everlasting life in His amazing kingdom, prepared perfectly for His beloved people. And death is the ticket that welcomes the people God loves more than His life, as He lovingly sent His only Son, to pay the ultimate price to purchase us, with His Son's death. As we can see, it is the death of His Son that makes the death of His people so precious, because in Jesus' death our death no longer take us to the gate of eternal hell but to God's everlasting kingdom. Let's learn and remember well, it is the death of Jesus that makes our death precious, because in Jesus' death, our death now leads us to God's amazing never ending kingdom.

Ps 117 (4/1/24)

1. To whom is the Psalmist calling to praise the Lord and why; what are the reasons why the Psalmist praises his God; what are your reasons you praise your God and will you make today a day to pray, to meditate, to sing for your reasons (today, instead of praising God for everything, be as specific with your reasons as possible)?
 - Here's a short comment from my Bible.
 - The Hebrews words used in verse 2, chesed (which may be rendered "steadfast love" or "graciousness"), and emeth (which may be rendered as "trustworthiness," "constancy" or even "faithfulness") are often paired together to describe Yahweh as absolutely dependable to fulfill His promises.
 - So, God is chesed and emeth, which is why He is absolutely dependable to fulfill His promises.

Ps 118 (4/2/24)

1. What do the first and last verses say and why should he do that; how does he describe his difficult situations and how does he overcome them; in vv. 22-23 and 26, where in the NT do we find them and what do they mean; what do you learn?
 - The confidence of the Psalmist in his God is real, for he seemed to have suffered greatly. He shared, “The Lord has chastened me severely, but He has not given me over to death... You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, and I will exalt You” (vv. 18 and 28). As great his pain was, the cord that held him was that God was his God, and God was “You are my God.” For the Psalmist, he spoke to God as someone right in front of him, “You are my God.” What worsens our time of pain is that we feel we are all alone, no one with us. But, if we can learn to see our God as the Psalmist does, then we too can find the confidence and see that our God is “You are my God”, our God who is right here with us, wherever we are. And the God who is here with us, is the almighty, compassionate, all wise, omniscient God, who cares for His people, for us, more than we ever can.

(For Psalm 119)

- Psalm 119 has 22 stanzas, reflecting the Hebrew alphabet, which contains 22 letters. It focuses on the two-ways motif—the concept of following Yahweh’s ways or the way of wickedness. The Psalmist highlights two aspects of God’s word: (1) God’s directives for life—calling for obedience, and (2) God’s promises—calling for faith.
- May our God bless your reading and meditation, leading you to a deeper loving faith and a joyful obedience.

(1) Ps 119:1-8 (4/3/24)

1. In God’s eyes, who are the blessed people and how have you desired to live your life similarly; what changes can you make in your life to live better as God desires?
 - In v. 4, we are taught, “You have laid down the precepts that are to be fully obeyed.” God gives us His words for more than understanding. His words are meant for us to fully obey them, with all of our hearts. God gives us His words so that we would learn to walk after them, as we walk through this world. That is why, the right heart and attitude and response to God’s word given to us, whether be in the preaching or reading or hearing is to fully obey, with all of our hearts that delights and loves to obey and joyfully obey. So, whenever we think of obedience before God, it is never simply done out of duty or responsibility or begrudgingly. Obedience to God is always in love and joyfully. And that obedience is the right response to God’s word for us.

(2) Ps 119:9-16 (4/4/24)

1. How can any person not sin against God; do you have such an experience you can remember and share; what are the many active ways the Psalmist seeks God’s word and which ways can you learn to implement into your life?
 - In v. 10, we read, “I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands.” As active, as wholeheartedly he gives in his seeking, he also knows that if left only to his strength and his doing, then he would stray. None of us seek our God with all of our hearts at all times. As the hymn says, we are prone to wander. As Paul shared, the good we want to do, we don’t,

and the evil we don't want to do, we do. So, this verse takes us to both places, our sincerest desire and efforts, and yet, still see, we are not to do God's will on our own strength alone, but always cling to God's grace to carry us through. Unless our God carries us, we won't go far. So, with the Psalmist I want to lovingly sing, "I seek You with all my heart," and also humbly and desperately cling to God and confess, "do not let me stray from Your commands."

(3) Ps 119:17-24 (4/5/24)

1. What consumes the Psalmist's longing and desire to see and do and why; what is your desire and delight to do and how can you better live such longing practically?
- Verse 17 reads, "Be good to your servant while I live, that I may obey Your word." I realize that as much as I want to live in obedience to God's word, when my life is in shambles, when I am depressed, when I am consumed with my misery, it's not easy to seek after God's will. So, to better obey God's word, the Psalmist prays for his life to be well, so that his heart will not be consumed with something other than obedience to God's word. I appreciate that. He wants a good life because he wants to better obey his God. So, the wellness of his life is not for him to live happily ever after, but so that he can live his life in full obedience to God.

(4) Ps 119:25-32 (4/6/24)

1. How is his present condition (vv. 25 & 28) and how does he want to be restored and how would that look like; how can you also have the heart of the Psalmist and walk like he and how would that look like in your life?
- When we are in trouble, when we are in deep pain, what we usually want most is to be healed and restored, and many times, we really do not care how, but as long as we are delivered, we are good with that. But, that's not the heart of the Psalmist here. He wants to be "preserved according to Your word," and "strengthen me according to Your word." He is not asking simply for deliverance, but to be delivered according to God's word, according to God's way. Despite the pain and the agony, he is seeking and searching to follow God above all else, even above his present misery. Oh, Lord, I pray that we and our church family will also humbly learn this incredible heart, so that whatever situation we find ourselves, even more than our deliverance, we will seek You, and our heart will lovingly follow and obey You, even if Your way should be different than the way we envisioned. May we desire to be "preserved and strengthened according to Your word" and Your ways more than anything. May You and Your word and Your ways always be higher than ours in us, and may we humbly, and lovingly, and joyfully learn to follow You more than our own ways. May our God be exalted far above the heavens and surely far above our own ways.

(5) Ps 119:33-40 (4/8/24)

1. What does the Psalmist want from God (can you be specific) and why; what specific things in your life do you want God to change you and why?
- In vv. 36-37, the Psalmist asks God twice to turn for him, "Turn my heart toward Your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes from worthless things; preserve my life according to Your word." Just like the Psalmist, my natural tendency is to turn towards my selfish gain if left on my own. And often, I find myself turning to worthless things. Oh Lord, I need so much for You to bless me, so that I will not follow my natural selfish tendencies and to worthless things that lures me in. Oh, Lord, I want and I pray that my heart will love and turn towards Your word

more than anything. I want to learn more to live according to Your word. I pray that I love You and Your word more than all the treasures, beauties and attractions of the world.

(6) Ps 119:41-48 (4/9/24)

1. What does the Psalmist want from God and why that; how does he think he can overcome the taunts the people throw at him and why; do you think this can also be applied to you—how and why?
 - I can hear taunts, not only from people, but also from situations and happenings and even from within my own head. I don't like it, but they are not wrong. They make valid points. So, if I argue back with what they say, my response is weak. However, when I respond back with God's unfailing love that saved me, then no matter how weak I am here, there's no taunt that sticks with me, because God's salvation has cleansed me from all my guilt, God's unfailing love has raised me from all my ugliness. No matter how terribly right the taunts are, they are wiped clean and they truly are so little in view of God's unfailing love and salvation, that the hurt of the world literally becomes forgotten because it's a small thing in light of His great unfailing love. Someone said it so well, "Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal." May all the taunts we hear be covered by God's unfailing loving salvation.

(7) Ps 119:49-56 (4/10/24)

1. Where does the Psalmist find comfort during his suffering and what would be some of the reasons; when is he gripped with indignation and why; what is his life's practice and how can you learn his practice into your life?
 - As we well know, comfort during our suffering is uncommon. When it hurts, our desperate prayer is usually about finding healing and deliverance as soon as possible. A future promise, a wonderful hope is usually appreciated when the suffering is not attacking us. But, when we are presently suffering, it's not easy to see beyond the suffering. And I appreciate the Psalmist here, because he is teaching and showing me to learn to live, not as I or people usually live, but he wants to take us into a more God honoring life. He is showing us how to raise our hearts and learn to lift them up and see our God and His words, so that we would not be drunk with our present difficulties, but to learn to live as our God delights for us to do, according to His words. Thank you for teaching and showing me God's way over mine. PTL!

(8) Ps 119:57-64 (4/11/24)

1. How is v. 59 connected to Romans 3:4 and can you share an example from your life; what is v. 61 like and can you also find and share an example from your life again; what else are you learning from this passage?
 - This section begins, "You are my portion, Lord; I have promised to obey Your words." As he first declares that his life is God's, he makes a promise that he will live his life, not simply to the best of his abilities, but only according to God's words. I appreciate his heart that wants to make the "promise to obey Your words," because we know, there will come times, when obeying God's words may not seem to be our best option. But, regardless of the situation, regardless of what might seem like better options, the heart of the Psalmist is, the situation will not determine his steps, because he makes the promise to obey God's words in any and all situations. That's the promise, to obey God's words at all times, every time, under any conditions or situations or circumstances and options. Simply said, God's life, God's way.

(9) Ps 119:65-72 (4/12/24)

1. Why is the Psalmist thanking for his afflictions; how have you experienced this in your life; how can you live v. 72 and will you pray for this in your life?
 - In v. 69, he says, “Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep Your precepts with all my heart.” Wow. When enemies attack, our first instinct is to defend ourselves. When they smear us with lies, we want to point out their ugliness more. That’s self-preservation for us. But, I am shocked and humbled by the Psalmist here. Rather than retaliate, he will enter deeper into God’s word and with all of his heart, he wants to keep God’s word above his feelings, above his hurt, above his hate, above the standard of the world. Loving and keeping God’s word first and foremost is his heart. Praise the Lord for his love for God’s word. Oh Lord, I pray, please, I want to learn his heart, to love You and Your word so much that I want to keep obeying Your word, no matter what in life. Oh Lord, I pray nothing will come in my life before You and keeping Your word. It’s hard and I don’t do this well. But, I want to, Lord. I need Your blessings to live in Your word. May my love for You be the greatest and sweetest, so I will love to keep Your word, because You are my first and greatest love!

(10) Ps 119:73-80 (4/13/24)

1. What did God do in His faithfulness to the Psalmist and why would that be; from v. 78, how are the roles different for God and for people; what blesses you here?
 - In v. 80, the Psalmist says, “May I wholeheartedly follow Your decrees...” He wants to not only obey God’s word, but he wants to do so wholeheartedly. He does not want to follow God simply because he has to, or because it’s a responsibility, or even because it’s simply good for him. He wants more. He wants to follow God with joy, with love, with excitement, with anticipation. He wants to enjoy following, obeying, doing God’s word. He wants his whole heart to get immersed, to feel it, to overflow with the goodness of walking with God, because our obedience before God is so very good, that this is what he wants most in his life. Oh Lord, “May I (and Nadia and our church family love to) wholeheartedly follow Your decrees.”

(11) Ps 119:81-88 (4/15/24)

1. What is the difference between his present situation and this desperate longing; what does he mean in v. 83, “Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your decrees”; what can you learn for your life from this passage?
 - The Psalmist commitment and dedication to cling to God’s word is truly remarkable. In v. 87, even though he is nearly killed, despite the harm and hardship, he will not forsake God’s word in his life. He wants to keep it, even if it kills him. He would rather keep God’s word than to survive life without it. Moreover, he says in v. 88, the reason why he wants God’s unfailing love is not to simply be delivered from his troubles, which he does, but he wants deliverance so that he “may obey the statutes of Your mouth.” He desires God’s unfailing love so that he can keep obeying God’s word in his life. The final resting place of God’s goodness was not for his wellbeing, but he hunts for God’s goodness so that he can obey God, to do what the Father delights for His children to do, that is, to obey the Father in every and any situation. Though our obedience always end for our good, but it is ultimately for the glory of God. And that’s what our life is, to do all things for His glory, and amazingly, in God’s glory, He always loves to include our good. We live for His glory, and in His glory, He always loves to include our good.

(12) Ps 119:89-96 (4/16/24)

1. What is the difference between the perfection of the world and God's word and how should that impact your trust; in the midst of your afflictions, where should you place your trust and why; can you share an experience from your life?

- In v. 92, he says, "If Your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction." In times of affliction, our desire and delight is to be delivered from it, no matter what. Remembering, meditating, and obeying God's word is usually not at the top of our desire when troubles abound. But, the Psalmist is again teaching us and challenging us to learn to live anew, praying and choosing to place God's word above every desire, to be our greatest delight, so that when the days of trouble come, we will still learn to walk with God's word, under any and all circumstances, situations, and moments of life, no matter what. Oh Father, I pray for our family and for our church, may Your law be our greatest delight no matter what, so that when the afflictions of life come, our greatest delight will still be to walk in Your ways according to Your word. Yes, we pray that Your word will be our greatest delight. In Jesus' name. Amen.

(13) Ps 119:97-104 (4/17/24)

1. How much does the Psalmist love God's word and how does he show it; in vv. 101 and 104, how are obedience to God and evil path linked; what from this passage do you want to implement more into your life and how do you see doing this?

- The love the Psalmist has for God's word is not simply desire. Because he loves it so much, he can literally taste it, as sweet as honey. But, it goes deeper than his imagination. In his love for God and His word, he will meditate on it all day long. But still, he goes further. He obeys God's word because he loves God's word more than anything. Obedience is the action that defines love. Jesus said, "Anyone who loves Me will obey My teaching.... Anyone who does not love Me will not obey My teaching" (Jn 14:23-24). So, the true language of love according to God, is our obedience. And as we are obeying our God whom we love most, our obedience must overflow from our deepest love and delight for our God to do His will. So, when we obey our God and follow His ways, we are to do so with full of love and joy and gratitude, as our God delights to love us in His awesome ways. His words to us and our obedience to Him is filled with love both ways.

(14) Ps 119:105-112 (4/18/24)

1. How can God's word be a lamp unto your feet and will you describe couple of those instances from your life; will you pray for vv. 111 and 112 be true in your heart and how can you live it; anything else that catches your eye?

- In v. 110, we see there was not a shortage of temptations or hindrances or roadblocks, "The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from Your precepts." It's not always smooth sailing as we try to live in complete obedience to God's word. Many difficulties comes, "but I have not strayed from Your precepts," is what we desire, delight, and pray we can do. Many things might try to stop, prevent and distract us from walking with the Lord, yet to all those obstacles thrown our way, may we be blessed by having a heart and confession to say, "but I have not strayed from Your precepts." Even when it's easy or natural for us to follow the ways of the world, may we truly say, "but I have not strayed from Your precepts." All because,

“Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart” (v. 111). Because God’s ways are our joy, we will lovingly not stray from God’s word.

(15) Ps 119:113-120 (4/19/24)

1. Whom does the Psalmist hate and what does he want to do with them and why; what is his attitude for God’s word and why; what is your attitude for God’s word and in what ways is it shaping you in your daily life; what more do you learn from this passage?
 - The Psalmist says in v. 115, “Away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commands of my God!” The reason why he does not want the evildoers near, and some of them would be his family and friends and the people he loves, is because they keep him away from God’s commands. For him, God and His words come before any human relationship, even the very dear ones for him. As a child of God, nothing comes before keeping the Father’s commands. And anything that will hinder, anything that might prevent, anything that may distract, anything that will lead him away from keeping God’s word, he does not want them near. Not because he does not love and care for them, but because his greatest care and love is for his God and His word. And he knows, obedience to God’s word is how we know we love Him most in our lives. We really need to learn this heart, because I see some Christians will befriend another person, and in order to keep company with him/her, they end up not keeping God’s commands. May our God be the first and greatest love and relationship for all God’s people, and may all other people, even the people we care for a lot, be a distant second that can never compete with our first and greatest love, our Savior and Lord and Creator, Christ Jesus.

(16) Ps 119:121-128 (4/20/24)

1. What is the Psalmist desperately looking for and why; in v. 125, what does he want and why; when God’s ways are right, what becomes wrong; what do you learn?
 - In v. 124, he says, “Deal with Your servant according to Your love and teach me Your decrees.” I hear often in our world, “Give me what I deserve.” Surely, judged by the standard of the world, some times, we do deserve some good. But, judged according to God’s perfect standard, all of us have fallen short, which means, if we received what we deserved, only condemnation and wrath will be ours. So, I treasure and want to echo the Psalmist words here, “Deal with Your servant according to Your love.” God’s love is unconditional, given sacrificially and generously to undeserving people, which is why, I desperately want God to deal with me according to His love and not according to what I deserve. But, he didn’t stop there, for he continued, “teach me Your decrees.” He knows, even after receiving God’s amazing love, if we are not taught God’s ways, then we will continue living after our foolishness. Only if we are taught God’s decrees, can we unlearn our ways and learn God’s ways, so that we can walk with Him, growing more into His likeness. Yes, Lord, teach me, teach us, Your ways, Your loving and truthful ways, to shape us and direct our path.

(17) Ps 119:129-136 (4/22/24)

1. Why does he pant and how can we live like that; what does he not want to rule over him and why wouldn’t he want that; why does streams of tears flow from him and what about his heart do you want to learn?

- He says in v. 136, “Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for Your law is not obeyed.” He sees other people not obeying God’s word and it breaks his heart, so he cries. His tears are because of the disobedience of other people not loving and obeying his God. What precious tears they are. What great reasons for tears. Oh Lord, I pray that my heart will break like his, to cry for the people who don’t love You and won’t obey You. Lord, bless my heart to see how broken their lives are outside of Your word. May we and our church be a people and a place where people in disobedience will meet people loving to obey our God because “Your statutes are wonderful; therefore I obey them.” May we be people who “open our mouth and pant, longing for Your commands.” Lord, may we love Your word more, and may Your word mold us and shape us more as You delight, more into the image of Christ Jesus, our holy God.

(18) Ps 119:137-144 (4/23/24)

1. How are God’s character and laws connected and what should that mean for us; what do you think v. 139 mean; how could we apply v. 143 into our lives?

- In v. 141, the Psalmist shared, “Though I am lowly and despised, I do not forget Your precepts.” What I have seen in my life is quite the opposite. When I am lowly and feel despised, then my temptation is to forget everything, including God’s words and ways. My temptation is to disregard everything and everyone, and enter into my own little shell, and “oh pity me” takes over. Lord, I pray for a heart like the Psalmist. I do not want to forget Your words. May I learn and treasure Your words more than my own little pitiful self. Lord, I want to learn to lift up my eyes to You and not lower it to me, so I can see more of Your goodness.

(19) Ps 119:145-152 (4/24/24)

1. How does the Psalmist view God’s word in this passage; who are the two people that are near him and how does that impact him; what do you learn?

- The Psalmist asks God to answer him and to save him, so “I will obey (keep, put my hope, meditate) Your decrees.” As God is near him, he wants to be near God’s word, because that’s how he stays near God. Earlier in Ps 119:9, the question was asked, “How can a young person (any person) stay on the path of purity?” and the answer was, “By living according to Your word.” When God’s word is near, when we read and meditate and abide and follow and obey God’s word, then we are able to walk in God’s purity and stay away from sinning against God. A wholehearted, joyful obedience to God’s word is the best blessing we can find for our souls. Let’s earnestly pray that we would love to joyfully obey God’s word at all times.

(20) Ps 119:153-160 (4/25/24)

1. During his suffering and persecution, what is the Psalmist conviction and why and how would that look in your life; how does he look at the faithless and why and how has that looked in your life; what do you learn?
- In v. 155, it reads, “Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek out Your decrees.” If we read this as a conditional statement, then it will read, because they do not seek God’s words, they are not saved. Which would not be completely wrong, because all evildoers or the disobedient do not deserve God’s salvation. However, the more proper way to read this verse will be a description, which will be understood as, the life of the wicked who are not saved do not seek God’s word. People who are not saved, do not care for God’s word, so naturally, they will not seek God’s word. And if we can bring this into God’s people, then it should read, for

God's people who are saved will lovingly seek God's word for their lives. So, to read this verse as a description, it will read—For the people of the world who are not saved, they will not care to seek God's word; on the other hand, for the people who are saved by our gracious God, we will care and love to seek God's word for our lives. May we love to seek God's word more than our own wellbeing.

(21) Ps 119:161-168 (4/26/24)

1. More than persecution, what does he tremble at and why; what does he hate and what does he love and why; what moves your heart here and why?
- I love the way the Psalmist loves God's word. In v. 162, he says, "I rejoice in Your promise like one who finds great spoil." Reading and understanding God's word makes him happy like a person who found a great treasure. This kind of happiness is uncontainable, as it overflows into singing, dancing and sharing this joy to everyone you meet, even unto strangers. Oh, to have such joy for God's word is what I pray for me and my wife, for our church, for God's people. In v. 167, he says, "I obey Your statutes, for I love them greatly." Once again, his obedience before God's word is more than duty and responsibility. He obeys because he loves God's word. His obedience is the natural result of his love for God and His words. Yes again. May I obey my God because He is my first and greatest love. May all God's people obey our God because He is our first and greatest love. Yes God; may You always be our first and greatest love!

(22) Ps 119:169-176 (4/27/24)

1. What kind of understanding does the Psalmist want and why that; what do you learn from this passage; if you can list a few things, what did you learn from Ps 119:1-176?
- Psalm 119 ends with v. 176, "I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek Your servant, for I have not forgotten Your commands." Throughout this Psalm, we read how much he loves God and how greatly he delights to obey God's word. As true as that is, still he strays like a lost sheep from time to time. Like the hymn writer, he confesses, prone to wander I feel it. Once again, we are reminded, even the most faithful believer, struggles to wholeheartedly obey God at all times. That is why, we need God's grace always to keep us near Him. We need our God to "seek Your servant" because we can see, we will go astray if left alone, though we have not forgotten God's commands. The tension of the Christian life on earth is real; we know, for there's none of us who have not strayed like a lost sheep. So, with the Psalmist we pray "Lord, seek Your servant," for without Your pursuit, we will stray like a lost sheep. Thank You for being our Good Shepherd, who leaves the ninety nine, to seek Your lost sheep, like me. What a wonderful Savior and Lord You are, Jesus. Thank You!

Ps 120 (4/29/24)

1. What is the title of this psalm and can you explain why; what was his struggle and where is God in his troubles; in the midst of his troubles, what is he doing and why; what do you learn?
- In v. 2, he says, "Save me, Lord, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues." It seems that falsehood was the norm of the place he was living. Therefore, as a child of God, he cannot follow their ways. He refuses their ways and insists in following God's over theirs. But, when he does, they are at war against him, because he is against their way. That is so true in our

lives today, as it is true in our Christian life in this world. When we speak and follow God's way, the world wages war against us, because we are going against their way. So, when we speak as God our Creator, they wage war with us with mother nature, big bang, evolution, abortion, euthanasia, self dependence, "you have the strength within you to do anything," "you can become anything you want in your life if you put your mind to it," and "it's your life, it's your body, you gotta do what's best for you, or who else will care for you as well as you," among many ways to combat God as our Creator. What we believe, whether the lies of the world or God's truth, they impact greatly on how we live our lives. May we remember, we are God's children, and our Father is the God of truth, and may His truth capture us, transform us, lead our every step, our every decision, our every thought, our every attitude, and our every word.

Ps 121 (4/30/24)

1. How and why would the Psalmist expect help from the mountains; can you list the different ways God watches over His people according to this chapter; can you remember and list some of the specific and special ways God watches over you?
 - God's watch over us is simply incredible. He does not slumber or sleep to watch over us, which is why He won't let our foot slip. He watches over us from the sun and the moon, the light and darkness, from our coming and going anywhere and always. There is no time when He is not watchful over us, to keep us, to guard us, to protect us, to be with us. He truly is Immanuel, always and forever with us. No wonder, even if everything around us crumbles and shakes, our job is to "Be still and know that I am God." When we know Who He is, the Maker of heaven and earth, and that He is with us, then under any and all circumstances, we truly can be still because we know our God "got this." He truly knows how to handle all the troubles that come our way because "The Lord watches over you." It is not the idols on the mountains, but "My help comes from the Lord."

Ps 122 (5/1/24)

1. What is the reason for his joy; what are all the different reasons he finds delight in Jerusalem; which of them would be applicable for your life and why?
 - Jerusalem is the center of worship for God's people, because it is the place God chose to dwell amongst His people. Thus, knowing worship is central for his and the people's wellbeing, he prays for the peace of Jerusalem. It is not simply for protection and safety he prays for, but the peace for Jerusalem impacts his worship, which is where he finds the reason for his true wellbeing. Said it differently, when the place of his worship is attacked, then he knows his worship will suffer. And wanting his worship to be his most important and delightful desire, he wants nothing to break, to disrupt, to disturb and mess with his worship before God with His people. Oh Lord, I pray that we also would desire to keep our worship free from all the ways that may mess with our worship before You with Your people. Lord, I pray that we would pray for our worship and fight hard to keep our worship free from all the ways that may distract and disrupt our worship, so we can become the kind of worshipers You desire, and thus offer the worship You delight.

Ps 123 (5/2/24)

1. To whom does he lift up his eyes and why does he compare himself with a slave; what is he enduring and what is his plea; what do you learn?

- He is pleading for mercy. At first, I would have thought, he would seek grace more than mercy. But, he wants mercy, and I thought a reason why he would want mercy desperately. Because he is living in a world where contempt and ridicule have no end towards him, I can easily imagine his life becoming very bitter and even angry towards the evildoers. It's hard to forgive and wish them well, when all they do is make life miserable for him. And in that miserable situation, it's easy to imagine his heart wanting justice against them, for them to also suffer as he has. And seeing this in his heart, he probably sees that he too is sinful, he too is sinning, he too can be very evil against others. And seeing, the good you want to do, you don't, and the evil you don't want to do, you do, then you know, you are as guilty of sin as they are. And so, what he desperately needs more than anything is God's mercy, for God to not shower him with justice, with what he deserves for his evil, because he is guilty, no doubt. So, he needs God's mercy and not justice. And only God can give mercy when justice is deserved, which is why, he lifts up his eyes to God and desire God's dealing with him with mercy and not what the world or the justice system wants to hand out. Mercy from God is what he is looking up for. Yes, I also need God's mercy desperately, because I know am guilty of many miserable sins, but in God's mercy, He will not treat me as I deserve, but because of Jesus, He will see me with Jesus' righteousness, so He will not treat me as I deserve but as if I were Christ to the Father. Mercy and righteousness are amazing. Thank You Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for blessing us with such beautiful gifts.

Ps 124 (5/3/24)

1. What is a fowler's snare; how are the many ways Israel was delivered; can you recount and describe the several times God delivered you?
- Verse 8 reads, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." When life was too painful and could find no help from anyone, silently and faithfully, God was there, He was always there. In times of bitterness, He helped me to rediscover His cross. In times of despair and discouragement, He helped me to lift up my heart to His everlasting home He is preparing for me, for all His people, and in His home, I found hope. In times of loneliness, He was always there, listening quietly, attentively, lovingly. The Maker of heaven and earth walked with me, sat with me, and helped me, though I could add nothing to benefit His glory and kingdom. The King of glory was not too big to sit with me and help me, when I did not know where to look.

Ps 125 (5/4/24)

1. Why is Mount Zion and Jerusalem important; why does God compare Himself with Mount Zion and how would that look for God's people and also for you; what do you learn?
- This chapter begins with, "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever." It is not only God who is not shaken and endures forever, but the people who trust in the Lord will also not be shaken and endure forever. The people who trust in God truly become more like their God. We are taught that we become more like who or what we worship; we do become more like who or what we love. Indeed, we do. So, it's important to know who we worship and who we love, because that's what our image will grow more into. So, the important question to ask ourselves is, who do we worship, who do we truly love? And we will find our answer as to who we will become more like. Who do we want to become more like? May we love Jesus most and worship Him best.

Ps 126 (5/6/24)

1. What was the reason for their joy (in vv. 1-3); why would they sow in tears and what happens and why; what do you learn?

- Verse 4 reads, “Restore the fortunes, Lord, like streams in the Negev.” The Negev is a desert region of Southern Israel. So, it would be dry and parched, “until the winter rains renew their flow.” Where it is normally a dry place, a stream comes alive because of the winter rain. Their lives may be dry and parched presently, but they will be restored because the winter rain was coming. So, it is with our lives. We may be going through dry spells and our lives may presently look parched, but if we can remember the winter rain was coming, then we would know, the streams will come alive even in this desert region. May we not always judge our lives by what we see presently, but always remember what’s coming and thus what will happen because the Lord will send the rain. Yes, let’s remember, the Lord will send the rain.

Ps 127 (5/7/24)

1. How are our efforts and God’s blessings connected and why; how does God view children and how are some of the different ways the world views them today and why do you think that is; what do you learn?

- In the name of women’s right to choose, our society has laws protecting the people who kill the children whom our God calls “heritage and reward” from Him. Of all the evil sins we commit, I believe this is one of the worst, if not the worst sin, that people today are committing. And it’s horrifying to think that many politicians and citizens today make laws and march the streets to have the freedom to destroy the life of babies that will be soon born. On the day of their judgment, what terror they will experience before the Holy God, who will hold each of them, all of us actually, accountable. We will all be held accountable for the wages of our sins. And none of us are blameless, so it’s a frightening place. And only because the holy God has gifted us His faith on His Son, Christ Jesus, to be our ransom price for our debts to Him for our sins, do we know we will not experience the terrifying price for our sins, because Jesus paid for them all. Oh, may these people stop their drunkenness into sin, and may they repent for their great evil. Oh Lord, please bless them to repent. And may God’s people not encourage them with our silence or even standing with them all because we can sympathize with some of them who are people we like. May God’s people have the discernment to know, friendship with people should not be over God’s word. May we learn to submit under God’s truth, and everything else that stands on the other side, we should learn that they are lies that we must not abide with. May our God and His word always be first in our lives.

Ps 128 (5/8/24)

1. What are the two actions of a person who is blessed by the Lord and why them; what fruits do we see from God’s blessing in this psalm and why them; what do you learn?

- Long life and many children are often described as God’s blessings. Of course, this is not an absolute rule, for we saw John the Baptist die at the young age of 30, without having any children. And our Lord Jesus was only 33 years old when He departed this world, and also without having given birth to any children. But, usually, long life and many children are signs of God’s blessings for us. May God’s people live long life and have many children, enjoying and rejoicing in God’s blessings all the days of our (and their) lives.

Ps 129 (5/9/24)

1. How does the Psalmist describe Israel's suffering; what does he wish for the people who hate God's people; what do you learn?

- The final verse reads, "May those who pass by not say to them, 'The blessing of the Lord be on you; we bless you in the name of the Lord.'" The Psalmist does not want the enemies to be blessed. This reminds me of Jonah, who did not want to see the Ninevites blessed. For the Psalmist and Jonah their hearts stem from the suffering the enemies brought on to God's people. So, in part, their hearts might be because they want to see their enemies rightly suffer as they brought great misery unto God's people. But, another reason might be, if the enemies were to be blessed, they might continue to cause more misery unto God's people. And if that's the case, then it's understood, the better the enemies do, the more suffering they will cause unto God's people. Similarly, in our world, the better a person who has no interest in God does well, the worse for God's people, because through that person, more of God's people will suffer. This also happens inside God's church because the more a person is loved or respected, who has no concern for God's glory, he or she will influence and mislead God's people further away from God's glory. That person should not be befriended as a friend. That person should be befriended as someone to evangelize and lead to Christ, and not make them feel comfortable, so they can repent and change. In God's church, being nice to everyone is not our objective. We should desire to bless each person to draw nearer to Christ, and some people must repent in order to draw nearer to Christ. May we love Christ and His ways more than our comfort or just being a good friend without Christ.

Ps 130 (5/10/24)

1. What does v. 3 mean and how can you prove that both Scripturally and in practical life; where does he find forgiveness and how does this happen as you understand it; who does he wait for and why; what do you learn?

- In vv. 6 and 7, we see the transition from I to Israel. He wants all God's people to also have the same heart that he has, that is, "put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with Him is full redemption." As much as he waits and hopes for God, he wants all God's people to have the same heart for God and to receive the same blessing he is hoping from God. I appreciate his heart very much. It is not enough that he is blessed, but he wants all God's people, all the people he loves to also taste and experience God's goodness. Living in our individualist culture, it's easy to get wrapped up with only me, my family, my church, and not see beyond my own little circle. Oh Lord, may our eyes widen, to see beyond ourselves and see all of Your people and seek the blessings for all, as You offered Your life, not only for certain individuals but for all Your people. May we see the greater-ness of Your ways.

Ps 131 (5/11/24)

1. What do you think he means with v. 1 and how do you think it is connected with Deuteronomy 29:29; can you describe in your own ways what he means with v. 2; how is this applicable to you?

- I appreciate the Psalmist's heart. Because after he learned how to trust in His God and find contentment in God, he wants to share his faith with all God's people, asking them to join him in putting their hope in the Lord (v. 3). That's one of the beauties of our faith, because when

we taste God's goodness, His goodness in us is always meant to overflow unto others. God's treasures are always meant to spill over to others, never held only for myself, as we might have the tendency with the riches of the world. The world's riches are meant to make you wealthy, but God's riches are meant to be shared with all. So, may we learn from the Psalmist to declare, "Israel, (Christians, all God's people, all people) put your hope in the Lord, both now and forevermore."

Ps 132 (5/13/24)

1. Who are the two people swearing an oath and to whom and what was the result; what is Zion and what is her importance; what do you learn?
 - In the end, the way God will divide the people are, to the enemies of His people, He will clothe them with shame, and to His people, He will adorn their heads with radiant crowns. The apostle Paul nearing the end of his life taught God's people, "Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing" (2Tim 4:8). All the shame, all the embarrassments, all the defeats, all the ridicules, all the ugliness we had to endure in this passing world, will indeed pass because the crown on our heads will be so radiant, that nothing of this world's ugly experiences will be able to steal away the fullness of God's joy, the fullness of God's majesty, the fullness of God's riches on us and in us. When we seem to be clothed with the ugliness of the world, while we are walking in this world, let's learn and remember that "He will (award to each of us on that day) adorn my head with a radiant crown." May the blessing of tomorrow bless us to learn to walk today with more joy and hope.

Ps 133 (5/14/24)

1. What does the Psalmist call pleasant and why; why do you think unity and Aaron and Zion are connected here; how is this applicable in your life?
 - Aaron, the high priest, is anointed with oil on his head. But this oil keeps flowing downward, on to his beard, then down on the collar of his robe. And I would assume, it kept flowing unto his robe, all the way down to his feet, and even unto the floor where he stood. Likewise, God's grace is also meant to always flow and overflow, downward and outward. When God's people and God's church are anointed with God's oil of grace, it is meant to overflow unto the people outside of our cup. God's blessing always begin inward, but always overflows outward. So, having received God's grace, our lives must spill more of God's goodness given to us unto others, as we act, as we speak, as we think, as we display our faces and attitudes, everything that shows outward should be a reflection of what our God has done inwardly in us. As God's people, I believe we must unlearn some of the individualistic worldly attitude, and learn His ways over ours, His direction over ours, His pouring that overflows, and not like ours, where we pour only to our cup, for our own enjoyment only. God's goodness is always meant for us to enjoy and keep passing on to others, as the oil kept flowing all the way to the floor.

Ps 134 (5/15/24)

1. How is the final Song of Ascent ending and why do you think that was; why would some of the priests work at night (Lev 6:13; 24:2-4; Ex 27:20-21); what do you learn?
 - A short note from my Bible notes.

- Why lift hands to praise the Lord (v. 2)? Since ancient times, lifting the hands has signified both praise and petition. The Hebrews used their hands to express their dependence on God and their respect for Him. Lifting their hands symbolized an expectant attitude and trust in God — that He would fill their empty hands with His blessings. One of the Hebrew words for praise, which is derived from the word for hand, can mean “holding out hands in worship.”

Ps 135 (5/16/24)

1. In v. 6, we read, “The Lord does whatever pleases Him,” what does that mean for God and how is that different than when people do whatever pleases them; how is an idol described and its worshipers; what do you also learn from this Psalm?
- Verse 1 begins by calling and exhorting, not only God’s people, but even God’s servants, whose responsibility was to praise God, to “Praise the Lord.” When it’s a job, a duty, a responsibility, then it’s easy to forget to do it genuinely and wholeheartedly. That’s why, all of us need loving and gentle and sometimes, not so subtle reminders and challenges to do what we are called for, and do it right, with genuine and wholehearted hearts, minds, and strength. We must learn and remember, Christian duties should never be done simply “just do it”, but whenever we serve and obey our God, our whole hearts must be involved. Our God never simply loves us like an activity, but He loves us with all of His heart, and if there is ever a doubt, we need only to look up and see the cross, and see how sacrificially and passionately He loves us, even beyond His own wellbeing. As God’s people, our greatest joy and duty is, to grow more like our God, not just in deeds and words, but most of all, in our of hearts, minds and strength. We want to grow more like our God, whom we praise and love and serve.

Ps 136 (5/17/24)

(* Repetitions may seem awkward to read, but they were (and still are) very effective when sung. Many Psalms were written for worship, and they were used by thousands of people gathered from all parts of Israel.)

1. What is this Psalm thanking God for; what is the repeated refrain and why do you think it’s repeated; what do you learn?
- A short note from my Bible notes.
 - The psalm is an antiphonal liturgy with the memorable refrain, “His mercy endures forever” (other versions will have, “His love endures forever”). A priest or soloist would chant the first part of the verse, and the congregation would respond with the refrain. Performance of the liturgy must have been powerful and moving, as the priest added example to example of God’s praise.
 - Perhaps, we can do this in the future, in our anniversary celebration, where many of our members would stand and read the blessings they experienced from our good God and praise Him for it, and the congregation would repeat the refrain with one voice and heart, “His grace endures forever.”

Ps 137 (5/18/24)

1. Why were they weeping and what did that mean for their faith and worship; why did he disliked the Edomites and the Babylonians; what do you learn?

- What did he mean in v. 4, “How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?” To be in a foreign land here means, that Jerusalem is destroyed, which means, the Temple is destroyed, the place of their worship is broken. So, it means, that their place to gather to worship their God was no longer there, so, it was no longer natural or even expected or free to gather together to worship their God. As captives, their primary task became survival over worship. And whenever they tried to worship their God, their captors and the people of the land found their worship strange enough to ridicule and mock them. Knowing the hostility of the people, could they still gather to worship their God lovingly and joyfully and thankfully? It wasn't so easy for them, as it used to be in Jerusalem. That's why, they were so fiercely angry at the Edomites and most of all, the Babylonians for destroying their beloved city and most of all, their Temple. May we learn and enjoy and love to “sing songs of the Lord”, while God is keeping us safe in our chapel, in our Jerusalem.

Ps 138 (5/20/24)

1. What are the specific reasons the Psalmist praises God; can you also make a list of your reasons why you praise God; how are your reasons for God impacting your life?
 - Two quick thoughts. In v. 1, he says, “I will praise You, Lord, with all my heart.” He doesn't just want to praise his God, he wants to praise God with all his heart. He doesn't just want to worship, serve, love and obey his God, he wants to do so with all his heart. Oh Lord, may that be true in our hearts, may we truly desire, delight and hunger to worship, to praise, to serve, to love and to obey You with all of our hearts, all of it, Lord. And in v. 6, he says, “Though the Lord is exalted, He looks kindly on the lowly.” With us humans, when are exalted, the tendency is to look down on the lowly. But, our God gives us a new heart, a new sight to behold. We are to look on the lowly, not down but kindly, even from a lofty position. That's why, Jesus coming to us as the Servant King is remarkable and so God-like. That's how our God is, from an exalted position, He does not demand to be served, but He came to serve. I am His servant, and I want to imitate my Lord, so that I can grow more like He. He is my picture, He is my delight, He is to whom I want to grow most like. May Christ increase in me, and I decrease.

Ps 139 (5/21/24)

1. Why is God so intent on knowing everything about His people; what happens in the mother's womb and what is the result; what do you learn about God and yourself?
 - In v. 17, David says, “How precious to me are your thoughts, God!” Not only God's thoughts and will and commands, but for David, God is the most precious being and companion he will have. Because God is more precious than anything or anyone, he hates the people who hate God, which will include his family, friends, and any and all people. For some people, as much as we love God, we will not hate our family or friends who hate God. David's hatred for these people is not because he does not care for the lost souls, but his love for his God is so much greater that anything that will smear His glory, David does not want. Truly, for David, God was his first and greatest love, and everything else fell far, far behind, even the people he cares about. I admire David's first love for his God, and therefore, he knew how to place everything else way, way behind. I pray that our first love for our God will lovingly place everything else far, far behind in our lives, in our relationships, in our decisions, in everything we do and say.

Ps 140 (5/22/24)

1. What are some of the ways David's enemies are trying to destroy him; in his troubles, how does David approach his God; what are some of the troubles you recognize in your life and what can you learn about approaching your God?
- David cries out in v. 4, "Keep me safe, Lord, from the hands of the wicked; protect me from the violent, who devise ways to trip my feet." In the previous verse, he was afraid of the tongue of his enemies, because they were "as sharp as a serpent's; the poison of vipers is on their lips." The deadly words of his enemies was not all David faced. In the following verse, he was afraid of what's hidden, "The arrogant have hidden a snare for me; they have spread out the cords of their net and have set traps for me along my path." In other words, just because he didn't see the evil coming his way, didn't mean there was no evil lurking somewhere nearby, ready to destroy him, whenever it could. Needing protection from all around him, David looked up to his God, asking, pleading and clinging to God, for His hands to cover him, to shield him, and to protect him. In the song of ascents, Ps 125:2, the Psalmist knew of God's overarching protection, as he confidently proclaimed, "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people both now and forevermore." Yes indeed, if the Lord did not surround us, if He did not guard us, all 360 degrees, how can we take cover from the evil attacks, when we don't even know how and where they are coming from. Thank You Lord for Your shield over Abram also covered David, as You also cover all of Your people, including little ones like us, "Do not be afraid, Abram (David-You-Nadia-Joshua). I am Your shield, Your very great reward" (Gen 15:1).

Ps 141 (5/23/24)

1. How was incense like prayer; what did he want to do over his mouth and why; why would David want to be struck by a righteous man; what do you learn for your life?
- David pleads with God in v. 4, "Do not let my heart be drawn to what is evil so that I take part in wicked deeds along with those who are evildoers; do not let me eat their delicacies." He knows, if he eats their delicacies, he will probably like it and get hooked, and if that's the case, then his heart will be drawn to what they like, and that will mean, he will go along with them to do evil. Oh Lord, I pray that I will not eat their delicacies, and see my heart be drawn to them and their doing. Oh Lord, please, I pray for Your truth to bless me to discern Your concern over ours. I pray that Your grace will bless me to desire to obey You over what I am attracted to. Oh Lord, please bless me to trust You much, much, much more than myself. Oh Lord, please keep me safe, from the evil of the world, and also even over my bad choices and decisions I may want to make for myself.

Ps 142 (5/24/24)

1. Where is David offering his prayer and why from there; in what kind of condition does he seem to be as he prays; in what ways can you relate and what can you learn?
- The first sentence in the opening verse caught my attention, "I cry aloud to the Lord." Of course, he may not have meant it literally, as he is at this time, hiding in the cave, running from the relentless pursuit of King Saul, out to destroy him. But, I can easily see David literally crying aloud to the Lord, though he is hiding and needing to evade Saul's clutches. For David, far more urgent and important and relevant in his present situation, was not the danger

coming from Saul, but his desperate need for God to be near him, to answer him, to know that God is present with him and is more than willing to deliver him. To be found by Saul was not as ultimate for David, though Saul was coming to kill him, but his most pressing need was to know that his God was near him, with him, to answer him. David wanted to be in God's hand, because that means, Saul's hands could do no more to him than only as his God would allow his enemy to do. What we have been declaring is right, the problem of our lives is not the presence of trouble, but it is the absence of Christ in the midst of our troubles. Oh Lord, may we also learn to cry aloud to You, even under the troubles that may seem that our quietness may be better served.

Ps 143 (5/25/24)

1. In what kind of condition was David as he prays; which characters of God is David reminding himself as he prays to God and why them; which characters of God can you look to as you pray in your hour of trouble and difficulties?
- David wrote in v. 9, "Rescue me from my enemies, Lord, for I hide myself in You." The pursuit and the attacks of the enemies had become so severe for David, that he confessed, "... he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in the darkness like those long dead. So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed." He feels defeated; He is depressed; His heart is in dismayed; He has withdrawn into the darkness as if he was dead. Despite such an overwhelming depression and defeat, yet, somehow, someway, David unbelievably finds a little strength to place his hope, "for I hide myself in You." He wants to hide, because he doesn't want anyone to see him, to find him. But as he gives himself to the Lord, he knows, he is safe, despite all the present things going so terribly wrong. Oh Lord, when our tears and our pain and our troubles seem to crush us, may our final little strength be, to place our hope in You, so we too can hide ourselves in You. May we truly see, You alone are our hiding place. Thank You Lord for keeping us in You.

Ps 144 (5/27/24)

1. In v. 1, what does David praise God for and how could that be applied to us; yet, where does his true victory come from and why would that be; how does v. 12 change the flow of this psalm and what do they mean; what do you learn?
- In vv. 3-4, David describes humans, as mere mortals, a breath, and a fleeting shadow. He asked God, why care for them, why think of them? We also ask, why care for us; why think of us when we are such a temporary and insignificant beings? In our human thoughts, only the significant and important and permanent beings or things have true value, and they are worth considering and caring. But, for small things, insignificant things, weak things are usually unwanted; they are for losers and we humans don't like them. And here we see, how different God sees and what we see. Our thoughts are not His thoughts. His ways have not become our ways. We see, we are too immersed in this world's ways, and our values, too often, reflect much more the world's than our God's. So, while the world, and even David here, may sincerely question why God should care for such insignificant and temporary beings, that's never been God's way. God cares for the weak, the small, the insignificant, and even the temporary. In fact, God lovingly teaches us, it is when we are weak, we truly learn more of His perfect grace and power. God blesses us to see, He did not come for the powerful people, but He came to save the sinners, who absolutely had no right before God, who did not in any way deserve any of God's goodness. That's me. That's who the sinners are, and for these undeserving, temporary breath, fleeting shadows God came to lay down His life in love with

grace in mercy. That's why, even though I know I am a sinner, weak and frail and fragile and a fleeting shadow, I am not ashamed of my weakness or smallness, because I am God's object of His love, His mercy, His grace, His goodness, precisely because I am small and weak, a sinner. And if the almighty God values me this much, despite of my smallness, there's never going to be any other beings who's value will exceed mine, because the almighty God, He, paid the most extravagant price He could possibly ever pay, to purchase me, to redeem me, to deliver me, and to raise me up to be with Him, to enjoy His fellowship, and to dwell and walk with Him in amazing love, eternally. I am not always certain why God cares for me. But I am certain that He cares for me, a lowly sinner, more than I can possibly know. And I know, He will call me home one day, that I may enjoy and dwell and drink His love eternally. Thank You, my dear God, for Your unbelievable and most amazing love and care, for a sinner like me.

Ps 145 (5/28/24)

1. In the many ways David praises God, which ones catches your eye and why; in v. 20, what's the difference in the way God treats the two type of people and why do you think that is; what do you learn?
- In vv. 1-4, I appreciate the opening of this psalm, expressing David's desire to exalt God. And coupled with his desire, he gives when and to whom he will apply in his life, that is, he will praise God every day, and tell of God's mighty acts to the next generation, his children and all those whom he is able to teach and lead. At times, I see myself having a wonderful desire for God, but not always applying to my daily lives in specific ways. That is why, I appreciate the details of when and to whom he shares his desire. It is said that the road to hell is paved with many good intentions. So, all the good intentions without applications in our lives are not good enough. In fact, we are taught that faith without deeds are dead. So, I pray that we will have many good intentions, and good intentions are really good. But, we must not stop there; rather, we must find ways in our lives to apply and live them out. Good intentions with good deeds, may that be our lives, while we walk in this passing world.

Ps 146 (5/29/24)

1. What is the call at the start and end of this psalm and how can you best apply this into your life; how is a blessed person described (v. 5); what kind of God do you meet in this psalm; what do you learn?
- In our lives, we would love to befriend the wealthy and the powerful, like princes, because with them and through them, we will be able to get so much more done than without their help. And seeing how power and wealth opens doors that seem locked to us, we see the value and the greatness of such friends and advocates. And not only will we love them, but we will learn to trust in them. And the Psalmist knowing our hearts says, "Don't trust in princes." Ultimately, they are human beings, and human beings cannot ultimately save us from our greatest needs. And so the Psalmist says, "Don't trust in them." Rather, our trust for our help must be, not in humans, but in our God, who truly can help and bless us in our greatest hour of need, on our greatest need, who has the ultimate power and wealth to save us and pay for the debt we could never afford to pay. Our trust must be in our God, the Maker of heaven and earth, who loves us more than anyone ever could, who lovingly laid down His most precious life, to pay the price for our insurmountable debt, whose sacrifice for us was His love and joy for us. This is the God, we are called to trust, and find our help from. May our God bless us to not place our trust in princes, in good friends, in our love ones, but only in our God, our only Savior, our only Lord, our only King, our only Authority and the true and right Standard for our lives.

Ps 147 (5/30/24)

1. What are the many wonderful ways God is described, which catches your attention and why; what specific ways bring God pleasure and delight; what ways of God ministers to you and how can you apply them into your life?
- I love the many wonderful ways God is described in this psalm. And as the Psalmist describes his God, he injects maybe a command or a challenge or an encouragement or a stimulation for himself and for God's people hearing about their God, to praise, to sing, to extol and to praise the Lord (vv. 1, 7, 12, 20). To know the beauty and greatness of his God is great, but hearing and listening to who God is, inspires him to call all God's people to join him to praise, to sing, to extol and to praise our God again and again, as this psalm opens, in the middle of the psalm, and at the conclusion of the psalm. Before, during and after God's wonderful description, God's people are to praise our God. We are called to respond in the middle of God's description to praise our God. The right time to praise our God is before, during and after learning more of our God's beauty. May we not praise our God simply at a designated time of the start of our worship service, but throughout our worship and throughout our daily lives and throughout our week and even when it is not during our worship service, may we praise our God, because He is worthy, because He is so wonderful, because He is our God.

Ps 148 (5/31/24)

1. Who is the Psalmist calling to praise the Lord and what do you find incredible; who does he call in the end to praise the Lord and why them; how can you also join more to the Psalmist call into your life and can you think of specific ways to do this daily?
- It is so exciting and awesome to hear the Psalmist call everything he sees and knows that God has created to join him in praising the Lord. It doesn't matter if he has no idea where they are, far above his reaches, and has absolutely no control over any of them, but he will still call them out to praise the Lord. He knows, he believes, and he wants everything God created to praise the Lord. And the most precious and incredible and close to God's heart, His people, he wants and calls to praise the Lord. Yes, Lord, may we learn and delight to praise You. May we see we are truly close to Your heart. And may we also learn to call and to encourage everyone and everything we know, to also join us to praise our God. Yes, Lord, may we lead and may we be an example for everyone and everything to see and to follow in our praising our Lord. Even when we are tired and exhausted, even when we are very busy and overworked, even when we are sick and hurting, even when we are resting and needing to get away, even through the mundane daily lives, through everything, every moment, Oh Lord, please bless our hearts and minds and lips to desire and delight to praise You, because You are truly worthy! You are worthy of all of our praises, always!

Ps 149 (6/1/24)

1. Where and how and why were God's people to praise the Lord; have you seen something similar in your life, can you describe; v. 6 gives us two simultaneous picture to behold, what are they and what do you think they mean; what do you learn?
- From vv. 6-8, they can easily be read as taking vengeance against the enemy, which is understandable, given Israel's history. But, when we come to v. 9, I realized it was not about

vengeance, it was about following and obeying God's command. It was not fury or hatred for others, but it was about lovingly obeying the words of our God in our lives. Destroying the enemy, the evildoers, those who choose to sin over God's glory, is not about hating them, but it is even more about loving our God so deeply, that we will obey Him, even if it means to destroy the people whom we feel close to. (Of course, we want to love them enough to call them to repentance from their sins and turn to our God for His saving grace. But what I have witnessed in our world is, many people place the people they love above their love for God.) In our love for our God, we are willing to do away with everyone and everything that will hinder us from glorifying our God most. Simply said, to say "Yes" to our God, we must learn to say "No" to people and to situations, because we are not able to do them both. Which we love most will determine our decisions. May we ponder deeply who we love most and see in our actions and decisions, if we live out our faith, or if we let our emotions and attachments to people or things blur our vision and thus confuse our decisions. May we truly love our God first and foremost, with all of our hearts, minds, and strength, and may everyone and everything be a far distant second that can never compete with our first and greatest love.

Ps 150 (6/3/24)

1. Where is the Psalmist called to praise and with what and to whom; who are called to praise and how would that look in your life; what are some of the truths-lessons-insights-beauties you learned from reading and meditating through the Psalm?
 - The call was never to simply praise. It is always to praise the Lord, the God who is our Lord. God is the center of our praise, and not the praise itself. So singing and making music must never be the focus of our praises, but it must always be focused and directed and offered to our God who deserves to receive all the praises we should offer. Similarly, faith itself must never be the focused, but our faith must always have the focused on the object of our faith, which is, Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord. We must always remember, the act itself, whether be praising or faith, are not to be what's most important. Our faith rests in our relationship, and that relationship always rests with our God. So, we praise, because we want to offer our praise to our God. We have faith, only because our faith trusts in our God, to work out our salvation for our good, in His ways, in His time, for His glory alone. All our acts are meant to be offered to our God, for Him to receive all the glory through our acts that are offered to Him.

(Will you write a prayer for yourself in light of the Psalm—couple of truths you learned?)

- Father, I thank You for opening my heart to see again, the beauty and greatness of Your word for Your glory and for our lives. I pray that Your word will be so alive that I will be moved to always love and delight to obey Your ways far above my thoughts. May Your word truly be the sweetest and the most wonderful truths that captures me, causing me to fall deeper in love with You. Father, thank You also for teaching me again to rejoice and praise You in all things, at all times, with everything I have, including through the times I see no reason nor have the strength to do so, all because You are most worthy to receive the praises that I offer so imperfectly. Father, I pray that I will learn to praise you every moment, every day, every reason, every circumstances, every situations, every where, every thought, every word will truly overflow with Your goodness and my praises to You, my Maker, my Savior, my Lord, my King, and my Owner. Thank You for Your word and Your praises in my heart. I praise You for You are good. Thank You for the love and privilege to praise You and to pray to You in Your Son's most precious name, Christ Jesus. And I say Amen, even though I prayed. Amen, again.