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| **KINGDOM PSALMS** **PART 1** |

Forty Daily Devotionals

from Psalms 1-37

(Based on the NKJV)

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| **Introduction** |

Christians are to be “musical” people! The New Testament teaches that we are to be, “Speaking to one another in Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19). That command is immediately followed by another, where we are told to be, “giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:20). Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:19-20). It is important to note that these two commands are attached to the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Thus, we learn that two proofs of the indwelling Holy Spirit are praise and prayer. This attitude of praise and prayer is meant, first, for private worship. When it is incorporated there, it soon carries over into our public worship.

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| **Daily Reading Schedule** |

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| **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Date** |  | **Day** | **Scripture Reading** | **Date** |
| 1 | Psalm 1 | 10/30/21 |  | 21 | Psalm 21 | 11/19/21 |
| 2 | Psalm 2 | 10/31/21 |  | 22 | Psalm 22:1-16 | 11/20/21 |
| 3 | Psalm 3 | 11/01/21 |  | 23 | Psalm 22:17-31 | 11/21/21 |
| 4 | Psalm 4 | 11/02/21 |  | 24 | Psalm 23 | 11/22/21 |
| 5 | Psalm 5 | 11/03/21 |  | 25 | Psalm 24 | 11/23/21 |
| 6 | Psalm 6 | 11/04/21 |  | 26 | Psalm 25 | 11/24/21 |
| 7 | Psalm 7 | 11/05/21 |  | 27 | Psalm 26 | 11/25/21 |
| 8 | Psalm 8 | 11/06/21 |  | 28 | Psalm 27 | 11/26/21 |
| 9 | Psalm 9 | 11/07/21 |  | 29 | Psalm 28 | 11/27/21 |
| 10 | Psalm 10 | 11/08/21 |  | 30 | Psalm 29 | 11/28/21 |
| 11 | Psalm 11 | 11/09/21 |  | 31 | Psalm 30 | 11/29/21 |
| 12 | Psalms 12 & 13 | 11/10/21 |  | 32 | Psalm 31 | 11/30/21 |
| 13 | Psalm 14 | 11/11/21 |  | 33 | Psalm 32 | 12/01/21 |
| 14 | Psalm 15 | 11/12/21 |  | 34 | Psalm 33 | 12/02/21 |
| 15 | Psalm 16 | 11/13/21 |  | 35 | Psalm 34 | 12/03/21 |
| 16 | Psalm 17 | 11/14/21 |  | 36 | Psalm 35:1-13 | 12/04/21 |
| 17 | Psalm 18:1-25 | 11/15/21 |  | 37 | Psalm 35:14-28 | 12/05/21 |
| 18 | Psalm 18:26-50 | 11/16/21 |  | 38 | Psalm 36 | 12/06/21 |
| 19 | Psalm 19 | 11/17/21 |  | 39 | Psalm 37:1-20 | 12/07/21 |
| 20 | Psalm 20 | 11/18/21 |  | 40 | Psalm 37:21-40 | 12/08/21 |

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| **Day 1: Psalm 1** |

*“Blessed in the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners…For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.” (Psalm 1:1&6)*

***Making Wise Choices***

The first psalm describes the “blessed” man whose “delight is in the law of the LORD” and “meditates” on it “day and night” (vs. 1-2). That person will be *firm, fruitful,* and *fresh* in their walk and stand for God. The psalmist said that they “shall be like a tree” that is “planted by the rivers of water” and that they will “bring forth…fruit in its season, whose leaf shall not wither…and whatever he (or she) does shall prosper” (v. 3). Although we cannot be certain as to who wrote the first Psalm, we can be certain that it was someone who fully understood the conflict between the flesh against the Spirit and the many temptations that believers face every day. God inspired this psalmist to write about two “ways” or paths that can be followed in life. The first is “the way of the righteous” and the other is “the way of the ungodly.” What is the difference between the two? A right relationship with God and the presence of the Lord! God “knows” our “way” and recognizes our commitment to His Word, His walk, and His work. He watches over those who choose His ways over the ways of the world and their own selfish desires.

**Prayer Emphasis: Thank God** for the difference that He has made in your life. **Read** His Word daily and **meditate** on some verse or phrase during your day. **Pray** for the music ministry of our church and **ask God** to help us to always honor Him in our praise and worship. As you read through the Psalms, **ask God** to put His song in your heart.

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| **Day 2: Psalm 2** |

*“Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.” (Psalm 2:10&11)*

***“Serve the LORD with Fear”***

Although Psalm 2 is not assigned an author in its title, Peter and John, and their companions, credited David with its writing when they quoted its first two verses in Acts 4:25-26. Acts 4:25 quotes those two early church preachers as clearly stating that these words were spoken “by the mouth of Your servant David.” When we understand the context in which this Psalm is quoted, it helps us to understand the Psalm itself. In Peter and John’s days, the religious and political rulers had been doing everything possible to stop the church from preaching the gospel and exalting Christ. However, their efforts had been in vain. Thus, the preachers returned from a brief stay in jail and quoted this verse to their fellow church members as they rejoiced over the Lord’s ability to overcome His enemies. The presence and power of God in their time of trial had convinced them to “serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling” (v. 11). While Psalm 1 begins with some commentary on the “blessed” believer, Psalm 2 closes with another person who is “blessed” when it states, “Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him” (v. 12). Notice that God had the psalmist write that “*all* those who put their trust in Him” will be “blessed”! Not just *some*, not even just *most*, but “*all”*!

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask God** to lead us into true praise and worship, not just while we are in church, but every day of our lives. **Enjoy** His presence in every service of our church and in your personal service to Him while you are out and about in this sometimes sad and worried world in which we live. **Pray** that people will sense His presence and respond to His every desire for their lives.

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| **Day 3: Psalm 3** |

*“I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.” (Psalm 3:5)*

***A Psalm of Confidence***

Psalm 3 is the first psalm in which the writer is identified. The titles and inscriptions that are sometimes over the psalms were not added by editors. They are words that were included in the originals. In this case, the writer is David. Except for Psalms 1-2, 10, and 33, he is the writer of every Psalm that we are reading in this first devotional guide. The title to the Psalm states that it is a “Psalm of David” and tells us that he wrote this psalm “when he fled from Absalom his son.” You can read the story that gave birth to this psalm in 2 Samuel, chapters 15-18. As we read this sad song, it is obvious that the writer feels as if he has lost many friends and gained many foes. In addition, even those who might still maintain some degree of loyalty to him have lost hope that God is going to see David through these dark days. He has lost his palace and much of his earthly kingdom. He has lost the respect of many, even those closest and dearest to him, including members of his own family. However, he has not lost his confidence in God! He believes that God is a protective shield around him that causes him to not hang his head in shame but to lift it in praise. He sleeps peacefully at night, wherever he might be, knowing that his God will sustain and protect him.

**Prayer Emphasis: Realize** that God has the answer to every need that we have as individuals and as a church body. **Pray** especially for our choir and praise team members today. Let some of them know that you are praying for them and that you appreciate their work for the Lord.

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| **Day 4: Psalm 4** |

*“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; have mercy on me, and hear my prayer…I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.” (Psalm 4:1&8)*

***Peace***

The title to this Psalm does more than identify the writer. It tells us that it was written for “the Chief Musician” and that it was to be accompanied “with stringed instruments.” The Psalm begins with a *praise* and a *plea*. The *praise* is found in the first part of verse 1: “You have relieved me in my distress”. The word that is translated “distress” in this first part of verse 1 is translated “trouble” or “troubles” in some other translations of the Bible. Just for the record, this word for “distress” is found more often in the Book of Psalms than in all the other books that come before Psalms, combined. It is also found more often in Psalms than in all of the books that follow Psalms, combined. The *plea* is found in the last part of verse 1: “Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.” Although this psalm was written during some of the saddest and darkest days in David’s life, somewhere between the first and last verse of this song God obviously answered David’s prayer and gave him the help and relief that he desired. In our focus verse David said, “I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.” Even in the most stressful times, and amid the most heart-breaking situations and circumstances, believers can “lie down in peace, and sleep” because they know that it is God that allows them to “dwell in safety.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to worry over things that you cannot control. **Trust** God in every situation and circumstance. **Pray** for our musicians this week. **Express** appreciation for their commitment and loyalty to the Lord and our church.

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| **Day 5: Psalm 5** |

*“My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up.” (Psalm 5:3)*

***A Morning Song***

Twice the psalmist used the phrase, “in the morning” in this psalm (v. 3). This leads us to conclude that the writer’s (David) day began with prayer. As we review this psalm, we see that David asked God for two things. First, he asked God for *direction*. In verse 8 he prays, “*Lead me*, O LORD, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make Your way straight before my face.” The word that is translated “straight” in verse 8 is found in only one other verse in Psalms, that being, Psalm 119:128. In that verse the Hebrew word is translated “right.” In that verse the psalmist said, “Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be *right*; I hate every false way.” Although we do not know who wrote Psalm 119, we do know that he, like David, desired to know that he was on the right path. In Psalm 5 David asked God for direction, and he also asked God for *protection*. His prayer concludes with David saying, “For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; with favor You will surround him as with *a shield*” (v. 12). One of the reasons that David said that he could “shout for joy” and “be joyful” was because of the direction and protection that was given to him by the Lord (v. 11). He knew that a right relationship would bring joy to his life.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to grow your faith and to put a song in your heart each and every morning. **Acknowledge** God at the beginning of every day and **thank** Him for every opportunity that awaits you. Let your life be a song of praise to our most worthy God.

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| **Day 6: Psalm 6** |

*“My soul also is greatly troubled; but You, O LORD – how long? Return, O LORD, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies’ sake!” (Psalm 6:3-4)*

***Unfailing Love***

Psalm 6 is also a Psalm of David. By comparing this psalm to the previous one, we learn that not every song can be a happy song! The Bible does not misrepresent life. Yesterday’s psalm spoke of rejoicing, shouting for joy, and being joyful. But today’s psalm, although written by the same person, seems to be written to a different tune entirely. In it we clearly see that even the lives of the most faithful believers are often touched by sadness and sorrow. In this psalm, David says, “I am weary with my groaning; all night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears. My eye wastes away because of my grief; it grows old because of all my enemies” (vs. 6-7). It is not wrong to pray for God’s mercy and healing when we are in physical or spiritual anguish. It is not wrong to ask God to deliver us from our sorrows and suffering. However, it is wrong to believe that the sorrow and suffering are indicators that God does not love us. The psalmist speaks of God’s “unfailing love.” The Hebrew word employed here is one that denotes the kind of love that is expressed between the closest friends. Every believer can know that he or she will never have to walk through times of sorrow, sadness, or suffering alone.

**Prayer Emphasis: Pray** for someone who is experiencing physical pain and suffering today. **Send** them a word of encouragement via the medium of your choice. **Share** a way that God has used their experiences to strengthen and encourage you in your own walk.

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| **Day 7: Psalm 7** |

*“I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.” (Psalm 7:17)*

***Two Important Reminders***

Today’s reading ends with two very important reminders. First, we are reminded that we should always be thankful to the LORD and, second, we are to sing praise to His name. Our focus verse contains what the Hebrews referred to as a vow of praise. Many of the Psalms include this kind of vow. A vow of praise is a commitment to praise God for answering prayer even before it is answered. It further implies to God that we will praise Him no matter how He chooses to answer our prayer. It is a very personal way to let God know that we trust Him completely with our lives and rely on Him to work in our best interests in every situation. Later, we will read where David told God, “Vows made to you are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to you” (Psalm 56:12). The word “binding” in that verse simply means that our promises to praise God are “binding” and that God has every right to hold us to our promises that we will praise Him despite, or, in spite of, our circumstances or situations. We should always remember that God desires and deserves our deepest, heartfelt praise and appreciation!

**Prayer Emphasis: Promise** to praise God in every situation and circumstance. **Believe** that He is working all things for your good and that He is always working in the best interest of His people and His church. **Ask** God to bless our church with the kind of trust and commitment that will promise to praise Him regardless of our circumstances.

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| **Day 8: Psalm 8** |

*“O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens!” (Psalm 8:1)*

***Majestic***

This psalm begins and ends with a declaration of God’s majesty (see verse 9). The Hebrew word that is translated “excellent” here in the NKJV is translated “majestic” in the NIV and some other translations. In other places in the Bible, this same word is translated “mighty,” “famous,” and, “glorious.” However, it is translated in your Bible, the Hebrew word found in those verses is used very sparingly in the Old Testament. It is found in only 25 of the 23,145 verses that make up that first section of the Bible. It is found only six times throughout the Psalms, with two of those times being in the first and last verses of the Psalm that we are reading today. The phrase, “O LORD, our Lord” employs both the personal name for God (LORD/Yahweh) and His name, or title, as Master or Sovereign over all creation (Lord/Adonai). God’s name is declared to be “excellent…in all the earth” and His glory is said to be “above the heavens!” In verse 4, after considering God’s excellence, majesty, and glory, David is compelled to ask God, “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?” Take the time to read verses 5-8 and you will see some of the ways that God has been “mindful” of man.

**Prayer Emphasis: Declare** God as your Sovereign Master and **submit** your every moment to His service. **Praise** His name and **mention** Him often in songs, praise, and prayers today. **Pray** for one of our church singers or musicians today and let them know how much you appreciate them.

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| **Day 9: Psalm 9** |

*“I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works…Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people.” (Psalm 9:1 & 11)*

***The Purpose of Praise***

David begins this song with a promise to “praise” God with his “whole heart” and to “tell” of God’s “marvelous works.” Most of the verses that follow include some reason for the praise that the psalmist has promised. Take a moment to circle or underscore the many reasons given for a believer to praise God. Verse 11 helps us to better understand the purpose for our praising God. Our praise is one of the ways that we “declare” or proclaim our wonderful and loving God to the world around us. How do we best “declare” God to others? One of the best ways to “declare” God is to declare “His deeds among the people.” In verse 14 David expresses his desire to “tell of” God’s “praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion.” The gates were places where it was common for the people to gather for meetings or just to socialize. David wanted to go to where the people were and let them know how great a God he served. The purpose of our praise is to lift up the name of God before others so that they might know of His “marvelous works.” Do not hold back! Make sure that everyone who knows you knows that you are a servant of God!

**Prayer Emphasis: Sing** for God today! **Proclaim** His wondrous works to all those around you. Allow praise to become one of the ways that you proclaim God to others. **Acknowledge** someone’s praise today and let him or her know that you appreciate how he or she feels about God!

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| **Day 10: Psalm 10** |

*“LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear, to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may oppress no more.” (Psalm 10:17-18)*

***Praying with Confidence***

Psalm 10 is a prayer for help in a time of great affliction. In the beginning of his season of trouble, the psalmist (probably David) felt as though God was standing “afar off” and not making His presence known to him (v. 1). However, as the psalm writer begins to pour out his troubles before God, the spirit of the troubled saint is lifted and encouraged, and he soon acknowledges that “The LORD is King forever and ever!” (v. 16) He is bolstered by his faith that God hears His people and holds them close in their times of trial. He states that God will “prepare their heart” and cause their “ear to hear” (v. 17). In these words, there is the implication that God sometimes uses problems to “prepare” our hearts so that our spiritual “ear” can clearly hear what He is trying to tell us. Whatever the circumstances in our lives – and no matter how severe our trials may be - we can always know that God hears us when we pray and that He is interested in our every need. He will always “do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed” and will not allow this world, or the god of this world, to defeat us.

**Prayer Emphasis: Believe** that God is listening and that He hears your every cry. **Ask** Him for something specific and then make a note to come back to this page and praise Him when your prayer is answered. **Pray** for God to be exalted in our praise and worship this week and that His presence will lift the hearts of those who worship with us.

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| **Day 11: Psalm 11** |

*“The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.” (Psalm 11:4-5)*

***Confidence in God!***

Although we do not know the exact historical setting for this Psalm, when we read it, we conclude that it was written in a time of danger, doubt, and desperate concern. Apparently, David’s very life was in danger, and he was tempted to run away and hide from his troubles. However, David decided against trying to run *from* his troubles and made the wise decision to run *to* God. In times of obvious uncertainty, David knew exactly where the LORD was – “in His holy temple.” He also knew exactly what the LORD was doing: “His eyelids test the sons of men. The LORD tests the righteous”. The one constant in life is God. He is the only thing that never changes. When everything else seems to be falling apart, God will always be there for you, and He will always be aware of your every need. We might sometimes wonder why God loves us so much, but we can always rely on His promise that He does! David was reminded of that fact as he drew near the end of this psalm. Read again the final words that David penned in Psalm 11: “For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; His countenance beholds the upright.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Seek** out someone who needs encouragement and let them know that you are praying for them. **Remind** them that God loves them and that He is aware of their needs. **Do** something kind for someone and **give** God all the credit.

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| **Day 12: Psalms 12 & 13**  |

*“But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because He has dealt bountifully with me.” (Psalm 13:5-6)*

***Help!***

Psalm 12 begins with a desperate cry for help. In my New King James Version, and many other translations, the first word in this psalm is “Help” (12:1). At this time in his life, David felt very alone and without godly friends. He said, “For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men” (12:1). Clearly David was sending forth a desperate cry for help. As we near the end of this psalm, it appears that David received the help and comfort that he needed from God. Some of his closing words reveal that David was confident that God would “keep” and “preserve” His people “forever” (12:7). Psalm 13 also finds David in a time of great concern in his life. And, again, we see him turning to God for help. It is obvious that he fears for his life because he fears that he might soon “sleep the sleep of death” (13:3). As we look at these two psalms, we see David’s *attitude* begin to gain *altitude* as he decides to trust in God’s “mercy” and “rejoice” in God’s “salvation”. God’s mercy and grace provided David with all that he needed to have a song in his heart no matter his circumstances. David decided to “sing to the LORD” because his gracious God had “dealt bountifully” with him. God never fails us! When all else fails, God is always there, and He is always doing what is best for us. That is something to sing about!

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** to sing praises to God in your darkest hours. An attitude of praise goes a long way in changing our opinion and outlook in any situation. Take some time to **share** how good God has been to you with someone you meet today.

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| **Day 13: Psalm 14** |

*“The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God.” (Psalm 14:1-2)*

***How Wise Are You?***

This psalm clearly states that “The LORD looks down from heaven…to see if there are any who understand, who seek God.” That phrase declares that God is actively watching to see if people on earth are truly seeking Him. The Hebrew word translated “looks down” here is one that means to lean over and look down. When God leans over and “looks down” on us today, will He find us seeking Him? Would He see that the desire of our hearts is to acknowledge Him in the face of those who say that there is no God? The word “understand” is a key to verse 2 and a key to what we should pursue in our lives. It is the same word that is used in Genesis 3:6 when Eve saw that the tree in the garden was able to make her “wise.” Therefore, the question looms before us, “How wise are we?” In a world that seems to be so against God, can He count on us to “understand” that true wisdom will seek life’s answers from Him? There is no greater fool than the one who refuses to believe in God. There is nothing more dangerous than that kind of disbelief. In one of his commentaries, the noted author, G. Campbell Morgans said about this psalm: “The thought of this whole psalm is the safety of godliness, and the peril of ungodliness.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Seek** God’s involvement in every area of your life. **Spend** a private moment with God and **ask** Him to make you the kind of Christian that He, and His church, can count on. **Ask** God to strengthen your spirit as you read His Word!

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| **Day 14: Psalm 15** |

*“LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?” (Psalm 15:1)*

***Who?***

David asks a very good question in the opening verse of this Psalm. He wants to know what kind of person is fit to “abide” in God’s house. He then goes on to give several characteristics of those who might be fit to be guests in God’s holy house. The person who can “abide” or “dwell” in God’s house is one who “walks uprightly…works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart” (v. 2). One worthy to “abide” in God’s house refuses to “backbite with his tongue” and does no “evil to his neighbor” (v. 3). Those who will feel at home with the Lord will despise the “vile person” and honor “those who fear the LORD”. They do not make promises that they will not keep, even if the result of their keeping their promise results in their “own hurt” (v. 4). Take a moment to review these few verses and see how your life measures against the life of the kind of person with whom David believes God wants to “abide” and “dwell” with Him in His house. Notice that most of these defining characteristics have much to do with the way that we treat our fellow man. We can learn a lot about how we view God by examining how we treat His children. Can you imagine how you would react if someone who had mistreated your children suddenly showed up at your house and wanted to spend time with you?

**Prayer Emphasis: Examine** the way that you treat others, especially those within your own household. **Be** **considerate** in the things that you say to or about other people. Be the kind of person that God wants to spend time with by being the kind of person that is good and kind to others.

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| **Day 15: Psalm 16** |

*“I have set the LORD always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope…You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” (Psalm 16:8-9 & 11)*

***Your “Right Hand” God!***

Psalm 16 is yet another psalm for the suffering. Twice in this psalm we see the phrase “right hand” (vs. 8 & 11). In verse 8 David states that God is “at” his “right hand”, and that, because of that fact he would “not be moved.” In verse 11 David declares himself to be at God’s “right hand” where there are “pleasures forevermore.” To say that God is at your “right hand” is to say that He is always there when you need Him. It is a statement of complete confidence that God is the answer to every problem, the cure to every ailment, and the fulfillment of every need. Because of God’s continual presence, there is no reason for any believer to ever be “moved.” The word that is translated “moved” here in the NKJV is translated “shaken” in some other translations. This means that unsettling times do not unsettle our beliefs or our confidence in God. When we keep our eyes and thoughts on Him, we maintain our focus and our faith. Our hearts are less apt to waver when our eyes are fixed on the Mighty God that stands beside us, with us, and for us at all times! There are also many benefits to our standing at God’s “right hand.” Having Him there to “show” us “the path of life” is just one of those benefits. His “presence” that brings “fullness of joy” is yet another.

**Prayer Emphasis: Encourage** someone today by reminding them to keep their eyes on the Lord at all times. **Assure** them that there is never a time that God is not with them; watching over them; and loving them. **Pray** for someone who may be lonely or discouraged and **ask** God to show you how you can minister to them.

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| **Day 16: Psalm 17** |

*“You have tested my heart; You have visited me in the night; You have tried me and have found nothing; I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.” (Psalm 17:3)*

***Every Believer’s Prayer***

Every believer should read the words of David in Psalm 17:3 and say, “Me too, God!” David made a very bold statement here that God did not refute. He said that God had “tested” his “heart” and “visited” him “in the night”, and “tried” him only to find “nothing” that would imply that he had transgressed God’s will in his life. He had come to one conclusion about his troubles and enemies. No matter what happened, he was not going to “transgress” with his “mouth”. This meant that he was not going to render violence for violence, hatred for hatred, or any other kind of evil for evil. Notice that David did not sin with his “mouth” because his heart was in good spiritual health. How could he possibly hope to react to trials and persecutions in such a noble way? The answer is found in verse 6 where David said, “I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God”. He was going to call on God for the strength that he needed to be the kind of person that he desired and desperately needed to be if he was to have any kind of influence in the lives of those who lived around him. It should be every believer’s prayer that we be a shining light to others.

**Prayer Emphasis: Repent** of any evil words or comments that you have made to or about others. **Ask** God to search your heart and reveal anything that might be hindering you from living a life that is filled with praise for Him and love for His children. **Forgive** when someone wrongs you and **seek** forgiveness when you wrong others.

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| **Day 17: Psalm 18:1-25** |

*“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” (Psalm 18:2)*

***The LORD Is…***

Although we do not consider the titles or superscriptions to the Psalms to necessarily be inspired, we do consider them to be helpful in our understanding the circumstances and situations from which some of these songs and prayers were born. In many translations of the Bible, the superscription and title over Psalm 18 reads, “To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.” The first words that David had to say to God were, “I will love You, O LORD, my strength” (v. 1). You can read more about the circumstances from which this song was born in 2 Samuel 22. You will even find some of the actual words to this song there. The first few verses of Psalm 18 are foundational to understanding how David felt after surviving his battles with Saul. He first expressed his love and appreciation to God and declared Him to be the source of his strength. He then declared the LORD to be his “rock…fortress…deliverer…shield…salvation (and) stronghold.” It was because of the many wonderful things that God had done, and been, to him that David considered the LORD worthy of praise. How could we possibly not agree?

**Prayer Emphasis: List** some of the reasons that you consider God worthy of your praise and adoration. Have a private “Praise and Worship” service today and simply **tell** God how much He means to you. **Seek** an opportunity to share what God means to you with someone you connect with today. **Expect** God to send someone with a great need to cross your path today.

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| **Day 18: Psalm 18:26-50** |

*“As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.” (Psalm 18:30)*

***Perfect***

When you read the words that lead up to verse 30, you have to say that God has David convinced that he can do anything with God’s help! He believed that God could “light” his “lamp” and “enlighten” his “darkness” (v. 28). David believed that he could be capable of doing super-human things with the aid of God’s supernatural help. In verse 29 he said, “For by You I can run against a troop, by my God I can leap over a wall.” In verse 30, he concludes that, “As for God, His way is perfect.” The word that is translated “perfect” here comes from a Hebrew adjective that means, “complete, whole, entire, or sound.” David was simply stating that God is a consummate God, one who is complete, and the only God that anyone could ever possibly need. The root word from which this word is born is in noun form. In that sense, it means that God is the completion or perfection of the believer. David is saying that God is “perfect” in what He does because God is “perfect” in what He is! He never fails His people because He always keeps His promises and lives up to what He says He will do!

**Prayer Emphasis: Evaluate** your own life and **enumerate** the many times that God has kept His promises to you. **Remind** someone today that God is as good as His Word. **Create** an opportunity to minister to someone today.

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| **Day 19: Psalm 19** |

*“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.” (Psalm 19:14)*

***Know Your “Lines”***

We can better understand Psalm 19:14 when we understand Psalm 19:1-4. In those verses, David spoke of inanimate, created things that “declare the glory of God” (v. 1). God’s creation faithfully delivers His message “day unto day” and “night unto night” (v. 2). The words of verse 3 sound almost like an Old Testament Day of Pentecost! There God said, “There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.” God’s creation speaks to mankind in a universal language, one that every person in the world can clearly understand. Verse 4 speaks of creation’s “line” going “out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” The word that is translated “line” in that verse is translated “voice” in some other translations. Perhaps it was with the faithful, far-reaching witness of God’s created world in mind that David uttered his prayer found in verse 14. His desire was that “the words of” his “mouth” be “acceptable” in God’s “sight”. What we say to the world about God is an important part of His plan to win the lost to Himself. Words that are “acceptable” or pleasing to God are words that reveal Him to those who need Him most. Do you know your “lines”? Are you ready to play your part in God’s great gospel presentation?

**Prayer Emphasis: Prepare** yourself to be a responsible witness for the Lord. **Learn** how to share Christ with others. **Practice** giving your testimony and the plan of salvation. **Accept** your role as one who was created to share God’s glory with others. **Refuse** to allow “stage fright” to keep you from fulfilling this great purpose in life.

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| **Day 20: Psalm 20** |

*“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They have bowed down and fallen; but we have risen and stand upright.” (Psalm 20:7-8)*

***The Importance of Prayer***

Psalm 20 is more of a prayer than a song. The story behind the Psalm reveals that David recited this prayer in a public prayer and worship service before he led his army to battle. A record of this type of prayer meeting is found in 2 Chronicles 20 when Jehoshaphat led his people and armies in prayer before a major battle. The armies were trained and well-armed. They had learned many appropriate strategies and had laid out their battle plans. They were not without weapons and supplies. However, they were not forgetting the most important element. If they were going to be victorious, it was going to be God that made the difference between their armies and the armies of their enemies. David and his people knew that they were not to trust in “chariots” or “horses”, but in “the name of the LORD…God”! As God’s church and army, we have so much available to us today. We have a beautiful church facility. We have many wonderful tools at our disposal. We are blessed to have adequate funds with which to do ministry here locally and around the world. However, we must never forget that our every effort must be bathed in prayer and that our greatest reliance must be upon God.

**Prayer Emphasis: Pray** for our church today. **Pray** particularly for our young people. **Pray** for our families, our student ministries, and our children’s ministries today. The secret to success in the life of any believer is to pray, pray, pray!

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| **Day 21: Psalm 21** |

*“Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power.” (Psalm 21:13)*

***Don’t Forget to Say “Thanks”!***

Psalm 22 is another psalm written by David and it helps us to understand that it is important to include God in our every plan and rely on Him for our every victory. But this psalm helps us to understand even more than that. It also helps us to understand that it is equally important that we thank God for all that He does for us and for all that He provides for us. Psalm 20 was a prayer given *before* a great battle, and Psalm 21 is a prayer of thanksgiving that was given *after* a great battle. We do not know with certainty that these two psalms are connected to the same battle, but their proximity in time and place indicate that they might be. In verse 1, the people were to see their “king” having “joy” in God’s “strength” and rejoicing in God’s “salvation.” It is important for people to see their leader’s giving God the credit and glory for every victory and then expressing their humble appreciation to God. As parents we are leaders. As workers in God’s church, we are leaders. It should be our desire that everyone who may look to us for leadership will see us humbly thanking God for our every victory. Verse 13 reveals that the people responded to their king’s example by saying to God, “We will sing and praise Your power.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** to base your every praise on God. Clearly **express** praise to God, and God alone, for your every victory. **Worship** the Lord from your heart and **sing** His praises proudly. **Pray** for our church officers and workers today.

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| **Day 22: Psalm 22:1-16** |

*“Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them.” (Psalm 22:4)*

***A Prayer Set to Music***

In the NKJV study Bible, the title to this psalm reads, “To the Chief Musician. Set to ‘The Deer of the Dawn.’ A Psalm of David.” It is important for us to remember that these words were not added by the Bible’s editors but were translated from actual language found in the original manuscripts. In this title we see an indication that this prayer, or psalm, was to be sung to the tune of an existing song. Quite a few songs were sung to the tune of other songs. They include Psalms 9, 22, 45, 56-60, 69, 75, and 80. When David notes that the psalm is “To the Chief Musician”, he is indicating that he wants this song to be included in the ones that were to be regularly sung in the public worship services. This collection of “Psalms” became one of the earliest “Hymn Books.” This song was *prophetic* in the sense that it spoke of Christ and his ultimate sufferings on the cross. You cannot read Psalm 22 without seeing Christ and His hours on the cross in it. But this psalm was more than prophetic. It was *personal* in that it described the way that David felt in some present situation in his life. But, beyond being prophetic and personal, this beautiful psalm was also *practical* in the sense that it reminds us that we, like our Christian fathers before us, can put our trust in God with the full knowledge that He is able to deliver us.

**Prayer Emphasis: Accept** some new songs/music along with the traditional songs that we love so much. Apparently, we are not the first body of believers that had to learn some “new” songs! **Pray** for God to be praised and worshipped in every song that we sing. **Pray** for our music ministry today and **express** appreciation to someone who is involved in our praise and worship ministry.

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| **Day 23: Psalm 22:17-31** |

*“I will declare Your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!” (Psalm 22:22-23)*

***A Threefold Purpose***

Psalm 22:23 reveals a threefold purpose for praise and worship. First, *we are told to “praise” God*. The word translated “praise” in our first focus verse is translated “boast” in several other places in the Bible. For example, this word for “praise” is translated “My soul shall make its *boast* in the LORD” in Psalm 34:2. It is also found in Proverbs 27:1 where we read, “Do not *boast* about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.” Knowing that helps me to understand that praise is boasting about God – bragging on His many wonderful attributes and actions. Second, *we are told to “glorify” God*. Some translations choose to use the word “honor” here in place of “glorify.” However translated, the first time that this Hebrew word is found in the Bible is in Genesis 13:2 where we are told that Abram was very “rich” in cattle, silver, and gold. As such, people spoke of his wealth and honored him for his accomplishments. We do that same thing for God when we “glorify” Him. We are simply acknowledging and honoring Him for all that He has done. Third, *we are told to “fear” God.* This means that we are to revere God and to be in awe of Him for all that He does, has, and is. That is the threefold purpose for every believer.

**Prayer Emphasis: Prepare** your heart for praise and worship by considering all that God does for you, gives to you, and is to you! **Make** your time of praise and worship about God and God alone!

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| **Day 24: Psalm 23** |

*“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” (Psalm 23:1-3)*

***“For His Name’s Sake”***

Psalm 23 is another psalm of David, and probably the most famous one of all. David probably wrote this psalm while he was a king, but it is clear that much of what David knew about following God and leading people was learned while he was a shepherd. I always connect Psalm 23:3 with Matthew 5:16 where Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” David stated that God led, or guided, him in “the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” In other words, God had a path for David to follow and that path was to be followed in such a way that God’s name would be praised as people observed David’s walk with God. Jesus said much the same thing when He told us to let our lights “shine” in such a way that men would observe our lives and give God all the glory for any good that is done. As believers, and followers of Jesus Christ, we represent a great God everywhere that we go and in everything that we do. We are commanded to represent Him well! Much of what we do to glorify God in our future will be based on what we are doing in our present. We should never put off being serious about our walk with God until some future time.

**Prayer Emphasis: Practice** putting God first in your life now so that you will be better prepared to put Him first in your life in the future. **Make** a conscious effort to live and serve in such a way that gives all the honor, glory, and praise to God.

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| **Day 25: Psalm 24** |

*Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.” (Psalm 24:7-8)*

***The “King of Glory”***

In almost every translation of the Bible, you can find the phrase “King of glory” five times in Psalm 24:7-10. Some believe that this psalm of celebration was written to be sung as the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem. If so, one can only imagine the joy in which this song was sung! When God was referred to as the “King of glory,” He was being referred to as the God, or King, that deserved all the honor and glory for every good thing that He had ever done, or would ever do, for God’s people. Notice that David repeated this phrase several times in this psalm. We often joke about those “7–11” praise songs that have us singing the same 7 words 11 times. Well, here is a case where the same three words were sung at least five times! Many of our most famous hymns repeat important phrases repeatedly because repetition is a valuable tool when it comes to learning. Who could grow weary of such phrases as “love lifted me” or “King of glory”? We all know that He is the King of glory – but do we know that He is our King? Do our children know that He is our King? Do our neighbors, friends, and co-workers know that He is our King? They will if they see God “strong and mighty” in our lives!

**Prayer Emphasis: Realize** that some words and phrases are well worth repeating. **Strive** to consistently live in such a way that people know that you are a servant of God. The words and works of a dedicated, sold-out believer are a song that our world desperately needs to hear.

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| **Day 26: Psalm 25** |

*“Who is the man that fears the LORD? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses. He himself shall dwell in prosperity, and his descendants shall inherit the earth. The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.” (Psalm 25:12-14)*

***The “Chosen” Way***

The Bible clearly states, “the man that fears the LORD” will be taught to walk in the way that God “chooses.” This verse indicates that God has a certain path or “way” that He desires for His children to follow. Notice that He does not leave us to venture forth on our own. God says that the one who “fears” Him is the one that He will “teach” to walk in the path that He chooses for him. In other words, God does not just wind us up and let us go without first teaching or instructing us on how we are to walk the path that He has chosen for us. How can we learn to follow the instructions of a God that we do not fear or respect? When we respect God, we respect His Word and His commands. We respect His right to assign us duties and responsibilities. We respect the fact that we should fulfill our duties and responsibilities in the way that He has instructed us and not according to our own design or plans. Life is about choices, but there are some choices/decisions that are best left up to the all-knowing God! Are we walking “in the way He chooses”? Are we faithfully following the path that He has chosen for us?

**Prayer Emphasis: Pay attention** to God’s Word and **seek** His instruction in every path that you take. **Give** God complete “veto power” in your life. **Walk** wisely down the path that He sets before you. **Ask** Him to guide your every step. Always remember that God’s Plan B is infinitely better than our Plan A! **Trust** Him to always do what is best for you.

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| **Day 27: Psalm 26** |

*“LORD, I have loved the habitation of Your house, and the place where Your glory dwells.” (Psalm 26:8)*

***“I Love to Go to Church!”***

The most vivid memory I have from my mother’s final years with us is wrapped up in the phrase, “I love to go to church!” At her regular visits with her neurologist, during her long battle with Alzheimer’s disease, her doctor would ask her the same, very simple questions at every visit. It was very sad. She could not provide the correct answers to his questions regarding what day, week, or month it was at the time of her visit. But, she could always take the pen and pad that he gave her and write a complete sentence for him. She always wrote the same sentence. He would tell us what her sentence would be before he looked at it. My mother always wrote the same, six words, “I love to go to church!” Well, David felt the same way! He loved to be in God’s house. Notice that he referred to God’s house as a place where God’s glory “dwells.” The word is in present tense because it refers to a continuous, repeated action and not some event that took place in some past time or on one given occasion. God *always* meets with His people, and it is *always* a glorious event when we get to worship Him together.

**Prayer Emphasis: Commit** to being faithful in attending worship services. **Participate** enthusiastically and you will soon be participating joyfully. **Express** appreciation for God’s presence and thank Him for all that He does for you. **Pray** for our church members and attenders, and especially for our ushers and greeters today.

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| **Day 28: Psalm 27** |

*“I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!” (Psalm 27:13-14)*

***What to Do While You “Wait”***

In verse 13 David admits that he would have become discouraged in the present if he had not believed something very exciting about his future. He “believed” that he *would* “see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.” The prospect of God’s anticipated presence was enough to get David through some discouraging times. David was wise enough to know that there are seasons of sorrow in the life of every believer. In verse 5 he talked about “the time of trouble.” But he said that “in the time of trouble He shall (future tense) hide me…He shall (future tense) set me high upon a rock.” However, David also disclosed that he was going to have to “Wait on the LORD.” Few things try our patience more than waiting. Psalm 27 concludes with two commands to “wait” for the LORD. These two commands sandwich the phrase, “Be of good courage.” Some translations read, “Be strong and take heart.” So, while we wait for the LORD, we need to do so with a strong and courageous heart. What are some of the ways that we can be strong in our hearts? Notice the things that are mentioned in David’s song: 1) David was faithful to pray (v. 4); 2) he was faithful in attendance to God’s house (v. 4); 3) he sang and made music unto the LORD (v. 6); and 4) he was always seeking God’s instruction (v. 11). Sounds like a good formula for any believer to follow.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to teach you how to wait! **Recognize** that we spend a great part of our lives waiting for something. **Trust** God to always make His will worth the wait! **Realize** that every believer has a bright future if they will simply wait for it.

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| **Day 29: Psalm 28** |

*“The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him. The LORD is their strength, and He is the saving refuge of His anointed.” (Psalm 28:7-8)*

***“The LORD Is…”***

Depending on what translation of the Bible we are using, we have seen the phrase “The LORD is” at least nine or ten times since we began reading the Book of Psalms. Some of the things that we have read that “the LORD is” include: 1) “The LORD is King” (10:16); 2) “The LORD is” our Rock (18:2); 3) “The LORD is” our Shepherd (23:1); and 4) “The LORD is our Light and salvation” (27:1). Three times, we have been reminded that “the LORD is” our “stronghold” or “strength” (27:1, 28:7, and 28:8). If you continued to read through the rest of the Psalms, you would find many references to God being our strength. If you read the Psalms through in the King James Version, for example, you would find that David goes on to say God is “my strength” at least 10 more times. As David lived through the ups and downs in his life, it was important for him to know where he could go for help in a time of need. Such knowledge was important for people in Davids day and it is still important for God’s people today. God will never fail us when we turn to Him for the strength we need to live for His honor and glory.

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God for strength. **Ask** for strength at specific times and for strength in specific situations. Be as specific about telling Him your needs as you want Him to be when He fills them! **Pray** for our homebound members today. **Ask** God to help you to use some of the strength that He gives you to serve one of them in some way. Do more than just pray about it!

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| **Day 30: Psalm 29** |

*“The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, and the LORD sits as King forever. The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace.” (Psalm 29:10-11)*

***Two Precious Promises***

Our focus verses contain two precious promises from God to His people. Both promises are based on God’s faithfulness to His people. First, we are told that, “The LORD will give strength to His people”. The word that is translated “give” here is a word that means to “give, bestow, or grant.” In other words, God’s strength is provided to His people, *not* because of their *merit*, but because of His *mercy*. The strength that we need to live for God in this world is a precious gift to His people. We can no more earn God’s strength than we can earn our salvation. The second promise is this, “the LORD will bless His people with peace.” Two of the key words (“give” and “bless”) found in these promises are verbs. They are things that God does for us because we do not have sufficient “strength” or “peace” on our own. When it comes to those things, we are totally reliant on God’s divine help. The best things that you have in life are the things that God freely gives to His people. Our Savior has promised His peace to all His followers. He said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you…Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God for strength and peace. **Believe** that He will give you His strength and His peace and that it will always be sufficient to meet every need, circumstance, and situation in your life. **Recall** some of the times that God has given you strength and peace and **share** at least one of them with someone you converse with today.

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| **Day 31: Psalm 30** |

*“For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.” (Psalm 30:5)*

***An Occasional Visitor***

I love Psalm 30:5! Thus far (through Psalm 30), we have read of God’s anger or wrath eight times. Before we finish Psalm 37, we will have read about it two more times. When you consider how many wonderful things that we have read about God so far, 10 mentions of his anger seem to be but a few. Whether we like it or not, God does have to chastise and discipline His children on occasion. That is exactly what our focus verse teaches us today. When we compare the time that God spends disciplining us to the time that He spends providing our needs and blessing us, His anger seems to be “but for a moment” while His blessings, or “favor is for life”. One translation simply reads that God’s anger “is but for a moment” while “His favor is for life”. The phrase, “weeping may endure for a night” could literally be translated, “come in at evening to lodge.” It is a phrase that was used to describe the occasional traveler or visitor that stayed overnight in a lodge or inn. What a wonderful way to look at God’s chastening hand. It is only an occasional occurrence and does not come to take up permanent residence in our lives. God does get angry with His people, but He never stays angry with us.

**Prayer Emphasis: Praise** God for His merciful forgiveness! **Search** your heart to see if there is any resentment or anger that needs to be dealt with. If there is anyone or anything that needs to be forgiven, then do it. “Mr. Anger” is one occasional guest that needs to be checked out and sent on down the road.

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| **Day 32: Psalm 31** |

*“For I hear the slander of many; fear is on every side; while they take counsel together against me, they scheme to take away my life. But, as for me, I trust in You, O LORD; I say, “You are my God.” My times are in Your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies…” (Psalm 31:13-15)*

***My “Times”***

The word that is translated “times” in Psalm 31:15 is the same word that is translated “time” 28 times in Ecclesiastes 3! There Solomon began by saying, “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). That opening statement is followed by twenty-eight specific examples of things for which God has assigned some “time” in the lives of His people. When David stated that his “times” were in God’s hands, he was saying that he was trusting God with all the events and circumstances of his life. Look back through the first ten verses of this psalm and look for words like “trouble,” “adversities,” “grief,” and “sighing”. In verses 3 & 4 David prays, “Lead me and guide me” and “Pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me”. He was experiencing “slander” and “fear” (v. 13). It doesn’t sound like David’s “times” were all filled with joy, but it does sound like they had all been delivered into God’s care. Some “times” life simply comes down to trusting God in spite of our circumstances or situations!

**Prayer Emphasis: Trust** God enough to trust Him with your “times.” **Allow** God to lead and direct the steps and “times” in your life. **Seek** His guidance in every situation. **Do** something to help strengthen someone who may be experiencing difficult “times” today.

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| **Day 33: Psalm 32** |

*“You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.” (Psalm 32:7)*

***“Songs of Deliverance”***

God never promises us anything that He is not able to deliver! Such is the case with the promises found in our focus verse today. God is our “hiding place” and able to “preserve” us “from trouble”. The words “from trouble” there do not mean that a believer will never face trouble. They mean that God will see us through our “trouble” and deliver us safely in the end. Furthermore, we are told that God will “surround” His children with “songs of deliverance” while we are in our “hiding place”. We can look back at Psalm 7:17 and 9:2 to get an understanding of what these “songs of deliverance” were. In Psalm 7:17 David said, “I will praise the LORD according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.” In Psalm 9:2 he said to God, “I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” To “surround” ourselves with these much-needed songs of deliverance, we simply need to “surround” ourselves with people who have been delivered and who are praising God for it! What kind of songs are you hearing from those with whom you are spending your time? If the crowd you run with is not praising God, then you need to find a different crowd!

**Prayer Emphasis: Sing** praises to God. **Praise** Him for the many times that He has come to your rescue. **Ask** God to use you to be a source of “songs of deliverance” to someone who needs to hear about a great and powerful God that comes to His people in times of need.

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| **Day 34: Psalm 33** |

*“Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. Praise the LORD with the harp; make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy.” (Psalm 33:1-3)*

***Rejoice!***

Today’s psalm begins with a command to “rejoice in the LORD”! Some translations use the words “sing joyfully” here in place of rejoice, and that is exactly what rejoicing is. Look at the focus verse carefully and you will see that this is not just a recommendation that God’s people be rejoicing. A careful look will reveal that this is a commandment for all of God’s children to obey. The “righteous” are commanded to “rejoice” because it is a “beautiful” thing for God’s people to do. The last part of the verse tells us that it is the “upright” who should be obeying this command to rejoice and sing songs of joy to God. The Hebrew word translated “upright” in this verse is an adjective. It is a word that describes the state of those who have been redeemed and who have experienced God’s forgiveness. By His grace, God has made us “righteous”, and by His grace, He keeps us “righteous”. Knowing this is enough to make anyone want to rejoice and sing joyfully to the LORD! After the opening verses, the psalmist lists many very good reasons for believers to “rejoice” and “praise” God. Take some time and mark some of those good reasons and see how many of them are applicable to your own life.

**Prayer Emphasis: Praise** God for your salvation today. **Thank** Him for the change that He has brought into your life. **Share** a word of testimony with someone today. **Look** for a reason to bring God up in a conversation.

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| **Day 35: Psalm 34** |

*“The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.” (Psalm 34:18-19)*

***Two More Promises***

You might not think so after listening to some of the preachers in our days, but every believer should realize that God never promised His children problem-free lives! He did promise, though, to be “near to those who have a broken heart” and a “contrite spirit.” In Psalm 34:19, God clearly discloses to His children that they should expect to experience many “afflictions” in life. We learned the same hard truth from Jesus. He has clearly taught us to anticipate trials and persecutions if we are followers of Him. Later, Paul said, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). Notice Paul did not say “some” but “all” or “might” but “will” suffer persecution. Let’s just go ahead and accept the fact that God has promised us that we will experience problems in life. However, let’s not get so hung up on that promise that we overlook God’s second promise in the verse. He also promised to deliver us from all our problems! The same God who allows His children to experience troubles is the same God who will enable them to endure their times of trouble. You can underscore the word “all” in Psalm 34:19 and claim that promise the next time you are going through a time of trial.

**Prayer Emphasis: Anticipate** trials and afflictions but **expect** God to keep His promise to deliver you from “all” of them! **Refuse** to allow trouble to rob you of your joy. **Praise** God for the lessons that you know that you will learn from your current trial. Doing that might help you to maintain your sanity and to drive the devil crazy at the same time!

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| **Day 36: Psalm 35:1-13** |

*“Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for my help. Also draw out the spear, and stop those who pursue me. Say to my soul, ‘I am your salvation.’ Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor who seek after my life; let those be turned back and brought to confusion who plot my hurt.” (Psalm 35:2-4)*

***Weapons and Words***

In the opening verse of this psalm, David’s plea was for God to “Fight against those who fight against me” (v. 1). When it came to his enemies, David desired that they see God as his “shield and buckler,” as well as his “spear”. Yet, while weapons were the appropriate things to request to repel his adversaries, words were what David needed for his own heart and soul. He simply asked God to “say” something to his “soul”. By that, he was asking God to speak words of assurance about the eternal things that mattered. While we are often quick to ask God for the things necessary for physical life, we are sometimes slow to speak to Him about our spiritual needs. While the body needs weapons and armor, the soul needs words and assurance that we are His and His alone, and that He stands ready, willing, and able to defend and protect us. What comfort David must have found in God’s promise, “I am your salvation.” Our salvation is not just a reservation in the hereafter in heaven. Many of the benefits of having God as our “salvation” are for the here and now!

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to give you what you need to thrive spiritually. **Remember** your spirit in your prayer time and ask God to encourage you with His Word. **Speak** something from God’s Word to someone who may be suffering and encourage them in their walk with the Lord.

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| **Day 37: Psalm 35:14-28** |

*“I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people…my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long.” (Psalm 35:18 & 28)*

***A Prayer and a Promise***

Psalm 35 is a prayer to God from the heart of a tired and persecuted servant. David was that tired and persecuted servant. He asked God for several things in this psalm. You might find it worth your while to read through the entire psalm again and circle or underscore the different things that David asked of God. However, this psalm does not end with a prayer but with a promise. When examined closely, it does not appear to be a conditional promise. In other words, it seems to be something that David is promising God whether his prayers are answered or not. His promise was to speak of God’s righteousness and of His praises all day long! In verse 28, David said to God, “my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long.” The word that is translated “day” in verse 28 is a word that is translated “day,” “time,” and even “year” in other places in the Bible. You could just as well translate this verse to say that David was promising to praise God, no matter his situation or circumstances, every *day,* all the *time,* throughout all the *years* of his life! Amen!

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to make conditional promises to God. When we promise God something if He will first do something for us, we are bartering with God and not praying to God! **Commit** to serve God even if He does not give you exactly what you want exactly when you want it. **Remember**, we probably have more to praise God about in our *bad* times than some people do in their *best* times!

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| **Day 38: Psalm 36** |

*“They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.” (Psalm 36:8)*

***All You Can Eat***

Since David addressed Psalm 36 “To the Chief Musician,” we can safely assume that it was obviously written as a song that was to be included in Israel’s public worship services. In Psalm 36:8, David rejoices in the knowledge that God’s people are allowed to be “satisfied with the fullness” of God’s “house”. Some translations read that God’s people “feast” from the “abundance” of God’s house. The psalmist goes on to say that God’s people also “drink from the river of” God’s “pleasures.” It is important to make a special note about the word “Your” in this verse. The believer’s hunger and thirst are fed from that which belongs to God. He has allowed us to claim and appropriate all that is His as ours. He has opened wide the doors of His divine pantry and allowed us to not just eat but to feast from it. He has allowed us to be not just “satisfied” but to be “abundantly satisfied”. The word translated “satisfied” in the KJV and “abundance” in other translations of the Bible is a word that means to be saturated or completely filled! It means to eat and drink to one’s fill. When believers are invited to dine with God, they are invited to an “all you can eat” buffet from which we should always leave “satisfied”.

**Prayer Emphasis: Avail** yourself to all that God has provided for you. Realize that, as believers, we do not have to go around hungry or thirsty! **Accept** His invitation to eat and drink from His very best provisions and then **commit** to giving the best that you have to Him. **Pray** for any spiritually hungry people that visit our services.

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| **Day 39: Psalm 37:1-20** |

*“Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:3-4)*

***The Desires of Your Heart***

I had been a Christian for quite some time before I came to understand the true meaning of the wonderful promise that is found in Psalm 37:4. I had concluded that this verse was about prayer and that it meant that if I would learn to “delight” myself “in the LORD” that He would give me everything that I desired when I prayed. The only other place that this Hebrew word was ever used in the Bible was in Psalm 20:5, where we read, “May the LORD fulfill all your *petitions*.” The NIV, and other translations read, “may the LORD grant all your *requests*” in that verse. With that in mind, I was sure that the “desires” spoken of by David in today’s psalm referred to the things that he requested from God in prayer. I had to admit that my prayer life did not work that way! I certainly did not get *all* my requests filled. Over time, I eventually learned that both these verses meant that, when my heart was fully surrendered to God’s will, He would fill my heart with the right kind of requests, petitions, and “desires”. When I understood that, my prayers were more in accordance with God’s will because I was asking God to put the right kind of “desires” in my heart. When I am delighted in what God “desires” I am going to be a happy person indeed!

**Prayer Emphasis: Ask** God to put the right kind of desires in your heart. **Grow** in your knowledge of His *will* by growing in your knowledge of His *Word*. Never cease to be a *student* and you will never cease to be a *servant*.

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| **Day 40: Psalm 37:21-40** |

*“I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread.” (Psalm 37:25)*

***“Never!”***

In the vernacular of our day, we would have interpreted what David said in Psalm 37:25 by saying something like, “From the time that I was a little baby until now that I am an old man, I have never known of one time or incident where God ever forsook one of His children!” The word that is translated “young” in David’s statement from our focus verse is translated “baby” in the story of Moses (Exodus 2:6). In the story of Sarah and Abraham, and their being promised a child in their “old” age, the word there is the same word that is translated “old” here. I guess the words are translated the same in Exodus and Genesis because “young” is “young” and “old” is “old” no matter how you look at it! David said that he had “not seen the righteous forsaken” or any of God’s “descendants begging bread.” Some translations have David saying, “I have *never* seen the righteous forsaken”. So, in this case, “never” really means exactly that, “Never!” Come to think of it, I can say “Amen!” to what David is saying here. From the time that I first met Christ until now, I cannot think of one Christian that God has ever forsaken. It has never happened to me, and it has never happened to anyone I know. Therefore, I can say with certainty that I believe that God will never forsake us!

**Prayer Emphasis: Review** your life and note how faithful God has been to you! **Thank** Him for never forsaking you. **Rely** on Him because you know that He is worthy of your trust. **Share** a testimony of God’s marvelous provision with someone that you meet today. Contact us at gary@seminolebc.com if we can minister to you in any way.