

## Psalm 24-30 – Chapter Study

### Psalm 24

David composed this song in celebration of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

He **begins** by honoring God's **sovereignty** over all creation.

<sup>1</sup> The earth *is* the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

<sup>2</sup> For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters.

While simply stated by David, we may not realize what a radical concept this was to the people of that time – that there was only one surpassing deity who ruled the entire world.

It was the universal belief of other peoples that there were **many** gods & goddesses, each possessing control of only a specific realm of nature.

Baal was the god of the storm. Asherah the goddess of fertility.

Molech was the god of the region of the Philistines along the coast.

And so it went for all the deities worshipped by others.

The God of Israel was in a completely different class because there was no limit to His power or realm of sovereignty.

As David considers that holy sovereignty, he asks -

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

Who's qualified to come before God to worship Him?

<sup>4</sup> He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

Moral perfection isn't required; sinlessness isn't the prerequisite because no one is!

What's required is the **forgiveness** of God.

God **makes** our hands clean & our hearts pure.

What's required of us is to be honest & sincere with God.

We can't fool God – He sees our inner motivations.

Darren lives in Denver & works at an accounting firm owned by some believers.

He isn't a Christian, but thinks if he's going to advance in his career, it would be good for him to be seen in church by his boss.

So he starts going to his boss's church.

As he sits there each week, his mind is elsewhere.

He's 'in church' but communion with God is the last thing on his mind.

His idol, what he's serving with his time & energy, is **himself**, his own advancement.

The ones God accepts are those who long to worship & serve Him & come to Him in sincere acknowledgement of their inability to serve Him apart from His enabling.

<sup>5</sup> He shall receive blessing from the Lord,

It's the **empty** who are blessed, not those who are full of themselves.

And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

See – righteousness isn't something we produce, it's a gift God bestows on those who trust in Him for it.

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

Coming to an end in self reliance & learning to depend on God alone is the path Jacob had taken back at the beginning when God started the nation of Israel.

Jacob had lived his entire life by trying to out-smart everyone else.

Then God met him one night at a crucial moment in his life & wrestled with him for hours, until Jacob realized he could not overcome the Lord.

Crippled & reduced to utter dependence on the Lord, Jacob then cried out for the Lord to bless him – not because he deserved it but because he couldn't survive without it.

It was in that moment of total dependence on God, that the Lord blessed him and gave him the promise.

And this is why David puts a Selah here – so we will pause & realize the blessedness there is in total dependence on God.

<sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall

come in.

Since it was at the gate of the ancient city where the king & his nobles sat, the gates represented authority, power, rule.

As the ark now approaches the gates of Jerusalem, David calls them to rise in honor of a far greater power.

<sup>8</sup> Who *is* this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle.

God is the King returning victoriously from the battle He's just won & the city has turned out to welcome Him home.

Then David repeats it -

<sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. <sup>10</sup>

Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He *is* the King of glory. Selah

As the king of Jerusalem & all Israel, David already honored the Lord.

He wants to make sure all the other nobles & rulers of the people realize that in the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant, God's presence has come among them in a special way.

The essence of Psalm 24 is worship.

The key elements David draws out here about worship are recognizing the sovereignty of God, His holiness, & our total dependence on Him.

That dependence on God *continues* in the *next Psalm* as well.

Psalm 25

This composition of David's was an *acrostic* – each line begins with the the next letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

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

In the previous psalm, David said the one who's accepted by God is the one who HADN'T *lifted his soul* to an idol.

Rather, he *lifts his soul* to the Lord.

To 'lift the soul' meant to offer up in devoted service. It's what you give yourself to.

<sup>2</sup> O my God, I trust in You; Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies triumph over me.

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, let no one who waits on You be ashamed; Let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause.

Having placed his trust *solely* in the Lord, David asks the Lord to come through and defend him in his time of need.

Rather, may it be the wicked who's plans go awry

<sup>4</sup> Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths.

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

David has walked with God long enough to know that the ways of God & man are completely different.

From his own experience he knows that when he just does things by his own counsel, they often go amiss & things fall apart.

But God's ways are always spot on.

So he asks God to make clear His path & how he ought to walk in every situation.

[Explain how to do this – Pray, submit it to God, then trust Him to guide.]

<sup>6</sup> Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, For they *are* from of old.

<sup>7</sup> Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O Lord.

David asks God to deal with Him, not on the basis of how David's been in the past, but out of God's gracious & merciful nature.

[Story of the Pharisee & tax-collector – the key is to admit our brokenness & ask God to make us the trophies of His grace.]

<sup>8</sup> Good and upright *is* the Lord; Therefore He teaches sinners in the way. [they should go]

<sup>9</sup> The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way.

Again, note the emphasis here on confession of sin, on that poverty of spirit that *begins* the life of blessedness. We simply must get this through our heads because all of fallen human nature works against it.

The Fall has tweaked us so that we are compelled to defend ourselves and think we're okay when we

AREN'T.

<sup>10</sup> All the paths of the Lord *are* mercy and truth, To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.  
Mercy because we need it, & truth because we can't have mercy without being honest!

<sup>11</sup> For Your name's sake, O Lord, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great.  
Who gets the glory when God pardons sinners of their sin? **He does!**

<sup>12</sup> Who *is* the man that fears the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses.

<sup>13</sup> He himself shall dwell in prosperity, And his descendants shall inherit the earth.

<sup>14</sup> The secret of the Lord *is* with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant.  
By fear, David means **that one thing**, that **bottom line** in each of our hearts we would rather die than be without.

That one thing is our God.

It's those who have God as their God, their One **unrelinquishable possession**, who discover the secret to real success in life.

<sup>15</sup> My eyes *are* ever toward the Lord, For He shall pluck my feet out of the net.  
David sees no need to defend or protect Himself because he trusts the Lord to do it.

This is why he could walk away from his throne, palace, and Jerusalem during the rebellion of Absalom.

<sup>16</sup> Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me, For I *am* desolate and afflicted.  
Now we get to the real heart of the Psalm and why David wrote it.

He's going through a tough time where his enemies are after him.

<sup>17</sup> The troubles of my heart have enlarged; Bring me out of my distresses!

<sup>18</sup> Look on my affliction and my pain, And forgive all my sins.

<sup>19</sup> Consider my enemies, for they are many; And they hate me with cruel hatred.

<sup>20</sup> Keep my soul, and deliver me; Let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You.

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

<sup>22</sup> Redeem Israel, O God, Out of all their troubles!

David sees his current distress as an opportunity for the goodness of God to be revealed in a marvelous way. Oh that our faith in God might rise to this level – where in the midst of our distress we can celebrate God's faithfulness & the opportunity our troubles present for God to show His power & glory.

Psalm 26

This song is similar to the previous.

David is being harassed by enemies and asks God to defend him.

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O Lord, For I have walked in my integrity. I have also trusted in the Lord; I shall not slip.

<sup>2</sup> Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart.

In v. 1, David tells God that he thinks he's right with Him because he's already confessed his sin & been forgiven. But in v. 2 he acknowledges that he may be self-deceived and gives God permission to reveal to him any hidden or unknown error.

This is something we all must do – honestly ask God to lay us bare and reveal those lies our flesh & fallen nature have told us & we've camped on.

Then, get ready, because what the Spirit shows will be difficult!

Sometime, most times really, the Spirit will begin a prep work to get us ready so he CAN show us that stuff.

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

While at first reading this looks like a bit of boasting on David's part – it's not.

He's giving testimony to God faithfulness that's worked a practical holiness into his life.

<sup>4</sup> I have not sat with idolatrous mortals, Nor will I go in with hypocrites.

<sup>5</sup> I have hated the assembly of evildoers, And will not sit with the wicked.

<sup>6</sup> I will wash my hands in innocence; So I will go about Your altar, O Lord,

<sup>7</sup> That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Your wondrous works.

See – David isn't boasting here about what a great & moral guy he is.

All that's commendable in his life is the work of God's grace.

8 Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house, And the place where Your glory dwells.

9 Do not gather my soul with sinners, Nor my life with bloodthirsty men, <sup>10</sup>In whose hands *is* a sinister scheme, And whose right hand is full of bribes.

11 But as for me, I will walk in my integrity; Redeem me and be merciful to me.

12 My foot stands in an even place; In the congregations I will bless the Lord.

Though David is beset with trouble, once again he wins through in his confidence of God's help.

Psalm 27

This is yet cry for help from God.

The difference here is that the psalm ***starts out*** in a place of confidence then suddenly switches to concern.

1 The Lord *is* my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord *is* the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.

3 Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I *will be* confident.

Yeah!

4 One *thing* I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple.

To use a modern phrase – this is David's ***Mission & Vision*** Statement.

David's whole goal was simply to be where God was – to hang out ***with*** Him & be a delight ***to*** Him.

[The longing to be ***WITH*** someone.

Problem of loneliness – alone, no one 'with' them.

"I don't want to be 'with' you anymore."

God wants us to be ***WITH*** Him.]

5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle  
He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

6 And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

So far David has expressed his confidence in God's protection.

But suddenly things change & he cries out in desperation -

7 Hear, O Lord, *when* I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 *When You said*, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, Lord, I will seek."

9 Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.

What's going on here? Why does David go from the confidence of vs. 1-6 to the desperation of vs. 7-9?

Simple – he's being realistic!

Don't we all do this when facing a major trial?

We move ***back and forth*** between peace & turmoil, fear & faith.

We're confident in God one second, then turn right around & fall apart.

This is why the psalms are so instructive, so helpful; they're ***honest!***

David was a great man of God – but that doesn't mean he didn't have his seasons of failure & fear.

He did! But he always came thru them into a renewed confidence in the faithfulness of God.

The godly life, success in living, isn't to go through life w/o trials or challenges, or even doubts.

It's to come thru them with a deeper & richer experience of God ***in the midst of them.***

Who knows God better – the guy who's had it easy all his life, or the man who's suffered & discovered God to be faithful & a provider of help in the midst of distress?

Who can worship God with greater passion – the woman who's never been ill or the woman who's been ill and discovered God to be a Healer?

Who's experience of God is more *intense*, the man who's always had lots of money & clothes & food, or the man who lost his job yet experienced the generosity of God moving His people to provide for his family?

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the Lord will take care of me.

Parents are supposed to be the most reliable of human relationships.

Even if *they* should fail – God will not!

11 Teach me Your way, O Lord, And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.

12 Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, And such as breathe out violence.

David knows his enemies are just waiting for him to mess up so they can pounce on him, so he asks God to help him to the right thing.

Some of his opponents are liars who will bend and twist the smallest thing to make him look bad.

So David asks God to help him live such an exemplary life the false witnesses would have nothing to work with.

13 *I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord  
In the land of the living.

14 Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!

David not only knew God would *ultimately* vindicate him in the next life,

He knew as he patiently waited on the Lord for help, rather than going out & defending himself, God would deliver him in this life.

The key was to wait on the Lord's salvation rather than going out and taking matters into his own hands.

Psalm 28

These psalms came out of the same general time in David's life.

He's being harassed by enemies.

1 To You I will cry, O Lord my Rock: Do not be silent to me, Lest, if You *are* silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.

David depends on the sense of the Lord's presence to sustain him.

If he doesn't know God is with him he'll despair.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications When I cry to You, When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary.

3 Do not take me away with the wicked And with the workers of iniquity, Who speak peace to their neighbors, But evil *is* in their hearts.

4 Give them according to their deeds, And according to the wickedness of their endeavors; Give them according to the work of their hands; Render to them what they deserve.

5 Because they do not regard the works of the Lord, Nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them And not build them up.

While God is gracious & merciful with those who turn *to* Him, He's a righteous judge to those who reject & refuse Him.

6 Blessed *be* the Lord, Because He has heard the voice of my supplications!

7 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.

God is a shield to His people. We see that description often.

But it only helps if we remember how crucial a shield was to the ancient warrior.

It protected the soldier & saved his life countless times.

It defended from lethal blows of swords, clubs, axes, arrows, & stones.

It was also used to push back the enemy when it came to hand to hand combat.

The idea is that as we look to God, trusting in Him, He will protect us from the lethal attacks of the enemy.

Of sure, we'll *still feel* them, but they *won't harm* us.

Which is more *fun*, more rewarding & meaningful; *watching* a football game, or *playing* one & being on the winning side?

Which is better, **watching** a major league baseball game, or **playing** short-stop & making the game winning double play?

We are locked in a **spiritual contest**, a **battle** with an unseen but very real foe.

It's a life & death struggle & the stakes are eternal.

This is no video game – we are on a **real Battlefield** and are Called to do our Duty.

8 The Lord *is* their strength, And He *is* the saving refuge of His anointed.

9 Save Your people, And bless Your inheritance; Shepherd them also, And bear them up forever.

Psalm 29

Being a gifted song-writer, David often drew his inspiration from nature.

It was a canvas across which he saw the majesty of God writ large.

In this case, David watched a thunderstorm march across the land.

He saw it as an awesome display of God's power.

7 times he refers to the thunder as the voice of the Lord which overwhelms all else.

If you've every been in the middle of a thunder storm, you know how loud it is.

I was backpacking once when we got stuck at the top of New Army Pass.

Just over the ridge, the clouds rolled in and we realized it was going to start pouring, so we got out a 2 man tent and the 3 of us piled inside, dragging our packs in with us.

Then the storm hit and went to town!

Lightening was hitting the peak just up the ridge from us.

There was so much electricity in the air that our hair was literally standing on end.

When the thunder hit after each flash, it was so loud it was terrifying!

That's the idea here.

1 Give unto the Lord, O you mighty ones, Give unto the Lord glory and strength.

2 Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Wow – just give God His due!

3 The voice of the Lord *is* over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The Lord *is* over many waters. The rain is coming down in sheets; the lightening is flashing & the thunder is booming.

4 The voice of the Lord *is* powerful; The voice of the Lord *is* full of majesty.

5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, Yes, the Lord splinters the cedars of Lebanon. Trees will explode when lightening strikes.

6 He makes them also skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox. The cedars of Lebanon were huge, old steady things.

But when a storm like this comes, even they bounce around like calves that are playing.

7 The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire.

The lightening.

8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the Wilderness of Kadesh. The concussion wave from a thunder clap does shake the ground.

IT felt like we were getting slugged in the chest every time.

9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer give birth, And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everyone says, "Glory!"

If pregnant deer are severely frightened, they will go in to spontaneous delivery.

This storm is so terrifying, it causes them to do so.

But for those who understand that it's just a storm and an awesome display of God's majesty, they cry out in praise to Him.

[Story of little girl – "Do it again God!"]

10 The Lord sat *enthroned* at the Flood, And the Lord sits as King forever.

The greatest storm of all was the one that resulted in the flood of Noah's day.

God was over that mother of all storms.

11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace.

Psalm 30

This Psalm begins with the superscription that it was composed by David for the dedication of the temple.

David didn't build the temple; his son Solomon built it – but he worked from David's blueprints & David is the one who secured all the materials for its construction.

1 I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up, And have not let my foes rejoice over me.

2 O Lord my God, I cried out to You, And You healed me.

3 O Lord, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

4 Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

5 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.

This was something David had learned first hand many times throughout his life.

As we noted when we were studying the life of David in Samuel – everything he did, he did on a grand scale.

David never did anything half way or in small measure.

When he was good, he was **very good**, as when he slew Goliath & when he, **for years**, refused to take the throne from Saul.

But when David was bad, he was **terribad**. It wasn't enough to commit adultery with Bathsheba, he then conspired to assassinate her husband. His family life was so messed up when one of his sons raped his half sister, he did NOTHING about it!

David lived large – when he faithfully loved & served God he did **amazing** things.

But when his heart strayed, he was a **major league sinner**.

Because his name & reign was so closely tied to God, when David messed up and played the knucklehead – God had to discipline him in a manner others would see & take warning from.

So both his triumphs & failures were very public.

What David could say after having lived a long full life is that even when you get into trouble, if you'll just repent, admit your sin, and ask God to forgive, He does and **always** restores His favor.

6 Now in my prosperity I said, "I shall never be moved."

Wrong!

7 Lord, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong; You hid Your face, *and* I was troubled.

See how quickly fortunes can change?

8 I cried out to You, O Lord; And to the Lord I made supplication:

9 "What profit *is there* in my blood, When I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your truth?

10 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy on me; Lord, be my helper!"

David had learned the great lesson trials can teach us – to renew our dependence on the Lord.

So often we make the mistake of seeing trials as something just to escape from and will use ANY means to do so; taking out a loan, getting drunk, turning to some distraction.

God allows trials so that we would seek Him in the midst of them.

The way out of any trial, every trouble, is to seek the Lord.

As David said – "Lord, be my helper!"

11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, <sup>12</sup>To the end that *my* glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.