

Psalms Notes

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Introduction:

Hebrew poetry:

- Job – The Suffering Believer
- Psalms – The Blessed Believer
- Proverbs – The Wise Believer
- Ecclesiastes – The Empty Believer
- Song of Solomon – The Fulfilled (or Separated or Holy) Believer

Psalms means “songs,” but it comes from the Hebrew root word meaning “to strike.” These are songs that were meant to be sung with stringed accompaniment.

- The title for the ancient Hebrew manuscripts meant “praises.” It was the Septuagint that changed the title to the current Psalms, or “songs.”
- Hebrew poetry is different from English poetry. English poetry is built on meter and rhyme. Hebrew poetry is built on a thought or idea.

There are 5 smaller books in the book of Psalms:

- Book 1 – Psalms 1-41
- Book 2 – Psalms 42-72
- Book 3 – Psalms 73-89
- Book 4 – Psalms 90-106
- Book 5 – Psalms 107-150

Of the 150 psalms, only 100 have authors ascribed to them. 73 are ascribed to David, 12 to Asaph, 10 to the sons of Korah, 1 to Heman, 1 to Ethan, 1 to Moses, and 2 to Solomon.

- “David, at different periods of his life, was placed in almost every situation in which a believer, whether rich or poor, can be placed; in these heavenly compositions, he delineates all the workings of the heart.” (Charles Spurgeon “Treasury of David” p.49)

119 of the 261 Old Testament quotes in the New Testament are from the Psalms.

Chapter 1:

Psalm 1 is generally called an “orphan psalm” because there is no author ascribed to it.

- Psalm 1 speaks about the Law.

1:1 – “Blessed” – Lit. “happiness.” The word is often used as an interjection.

- Psalms opens with a benediction, much like the Sermon on the Mount.
- “...for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses.” (Luke 12:15)
The world defines blessing by attaining the things of the world, or circumstances, or even sensationalism. But the Bible defines blessing by relationship and character.
- Scriptural blessedness is always given greater importance than earthly happiness, because true blessedness and fulfillment are eternal.
- Some may have many physical advantages, but they cannot see them or enjoy them. The truly blessed is not the one who has the most, but the one who most enjoys what he has.
- It is God’s desire for each individual to be blessed. He is eager to bless us.

- “the man” – (Heb. “haish”) The Hebrew is emphatic; lit. “that man.” The one among a thousand who lives for the accomplishment of the end for which God created him.
- “walks not” – The first characteristic of the blessed is what he avoids. Separation is the first step to blessing.
 - Biblical separation is what we are separated unto, and not just what we are separated from. Separation is not isolation, but contact without contamination.
- “walks...stands...sits” – These three areas covers nearly all of our waking life: where our feet take us, what we stand for, and what we take in while sitting.
- “walks not in the counsel of the ungodly” – It is not that you can avoid all ungodly counsel; it is just that you avoid continuing to listen to it once you know it is ungodly.
 - His footsteps are ordered by the Word of God and not by the cunning and wicked devices of man. It is a rich sign of inward grace when the outward walk is changed.
 - The walk is more practical than habitual.
- “the counsel of the ungodly” – Counseling that doesn’t take God into account.
 - The Greek term “psukikos” refers to the fleshly wisdom of the world. We get our English word psychology from that word.
- “stands in the path of sinners” – Refusing to revisit places of ungodly influence.
 - This is when a life becomes more habituated to evil.
- “sits in the seat of the scornful” – Taking up the opinions of the ungodly and making yourself at home there. This is eventually being rooted in sin. (Compare with v. 3.)
 - This is the person who teaches and tempts others away from the Lord.

1:2 – “But” – This is in contrast to what he avoids.

- The second step to blessing is saturation.
- “delight is in the law of the Lord” – He enjoys (“delights”) God’s word. Delight comes from understanding the heart of the Law, not just from having it memorized. The Pharisees had the Pentateuch memorized, but Jesus told them that they didn’t realize that it spoke of Him.
 - This is when the Word changes from being medicine to being bread to us.
 - That certain pleasure, in the law, which doesn’t look at what the law promises, nor at what it threatens, but at this only, that “the law is holy, and just, and good.”
 - This man is instructed by the Word of God, not merely by men. (John 17:17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:14-4:2)
 - “Church ought to be a place where we feed sheep, not where we entertain goats” – A.W. Tozer.
- “the Law of the Lord” – One can even delight in the first five books of the Bible.
- “in His law He meditates” – In the plainest text of the Bible, there is a world of holiness and spirituality; and if we in prayer and dependence upon God did but sit and study it, we should behold much more than now appears to us.
 - This is not only us having the Word, but the Word having us.
- “meditates” – Lit. “murmur, mutter, growl.” Some translate this as “ruminate.” The idea is that we speak and hear God’s Word repeatedly throughout the day while actively thinking on what is being ingested.
 - This is the exact opposite of the emptying mediation of eastern religions.
 - To ruminate on the Word, you have to have swallowed something earlier in the day to chew on it later.
 - This is not legalism, but lifestyle. Mediation is more about the heart than about the form we assume will help us remember and meditate.
 - We will delight in that on which we meditate and we will meditate on that in which we delight.

- 1:3 – “planted” – This word can also be translated “transplanted.” Either way, there is a gardener (the Father) that is doing the planting. This is not a wild tree, but a tree chosen, considered as property, cultivated, and secured. (Matt. 15:13)
- The third step to being blessed deals with one’s situation.
 - The difference between walking, standing, and sitting is based on who is doing the acting. In sitting, I am trying to retain control. In being planted, He is doing the work while I am surrendered.
 - “the rivers of water” – He is tapped into an unseen life-source.
 - “water” – In the Bible, when water is cleansing, it is speaking of the Word of God, but when water is nourishing or filling, it is speaking of the Holy Spirit.
 - “fruit in its season” – Fruit-bearing goes through its seasons. Fruit born out of season doesn’t get ripe. But fruit is eventually borne without striving or struggling, but simply by sending roots into the water.
 - If we abide in the vine we will bear much fruit. (John 10) We will bear the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5)
 - “Until it receives the early and latter rain.” (James 5:7)
 - The trials of the saint are a divine husbandry, by which he grows and brings forth abundant fruit.
 - “Healthy sheep reproduce” – Joe Focht.
 - This verse is very similar to Jer. 17:5-8.
 - “its fruit...whose leaf” – He describes the fruit before the leaf.
 - The fruit is a blessing to others. The leaf is a sustaining part of the tree.
- 1:4 – “ungodly” – This refers to the “nice” person down the street who doesn’t care about God.
- “The fool has said in his heart there is no God.” (Ps. 14:1; 53:1)
 - Moral decay follows the rejection of God.
 - “chaff which the wind drives away” – They are empty and hollow, unstable and worthless, and transient and fleeting. Their character is intrinsically worthless, dead, unserviceable, without substance, and easily carried away.
 - Chaff is only good for burning. (Matt. 3:12)
 - In contrast to the fruitfulness and life described in v. 3.
- 1:5 – “not stand in the judgment” – This is speaking of their standing before God.
- “stand” – Lit. “to stand up under, or endure.”
 - “sinners...righteous” – The tares and the wheat grow up in the same field. The tares even enjoy some benefit of being with the wheat for the time being. (Matt. 13:24-30)
- 1:6 – “the Lord knows the way” – The Heb. is more literally “the Lord is knowing the way of the righteous.” He is constantly looking on their way.
- Jesus is the way. (John 14:6)
 - “knows” – Lit. “knows, oversees, and tends.” God’s knowledge of us does not just know information, but it is a personal knowledge.
 - “perish” – This stand in contrast to the blessing detailed in vv. 1-3.
 - God “takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.” (Ezek. 33:11)

Chapter 2:

Psalms 2 was written by David. (Acts 4:25-26)

- Psalm 2 speaks of the prophetic second coming of Christ.
- Psalm 2 contains 4 voices: v. 1-3 – the nations, v. 4-6 – God the Father, v. 7-9 – God the Son, and v. 10-12 – God the Holy Spirit.

2:1 – “nations” – The nations are mentioned 175 times in Psalms.

- “a vain thing” – This refers to the nations coming together at Armageddon to defeat God.. It’s in vain.

2:2 – “set themselves” – This is not a temporary rage, but a deep-seated hatred, for they set themselves resolutely to withstand the Prince of Peace.

- “rulers” – This word is often used to speak of religious leaders.
- “the rulers take counsel” – They took counsel to put Him to death. (Matt. 12:14)
- “His Anointed” – (Heb. “mashiyach”) Acts 4 says this refers to Jesus the Messiah.
 - Jesus Christ is the dividing line in our culture. (ex. The recent prayer in the South Carolina legislature.)
 - When people reject the gospel, they aren’t rejecting me, but Jesus Himself.

2:3 – “break Their bonds” – The world doesn’t want to yield to the authority of Jesus. The rules and the lordship of God is what the nations are raging against.

- We all have gods. Something controls everyone. Nobody is completely free. The goal is to be governed rightly.
- “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:19)
- “cast away their cords” – To a graceless neck, the yoke of Christ is intolerable, but to the saved sinner it is easy and light. (Matt. 11:29)
 - Why kick against the goads? (Acts 9:5)

2:4 – “who sits in the heavens shall laugh” – This is not a laugh of humor, but of scorn.

- God has watched some very powerful military and political rulers come and go, but He still stands. He is not afraid of their raging.
- “The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will.” (Dan. 4:17)

2:5 – “He shall speak” – After He has laughed, He shall speak. He needs not smite; the breath of His lips is enough.

- “wrath” – God measures time morally, and when humankind gets to the point morally where there isn’t any redemptive qualities left, God brings judgment.
- “distress them in His deep displeasure” – God’s judgment is waiting to fall.

2:6 – “have set” – Past tense. He has already done that which the enemy seeks to prevent. His throne will not be shaken.

2:7 – “You are My Son” – This speaks of the divinity of Jesus. (Heb. 1:5)

- The toughest thing for the religious leaders to accept concerning Jesus was His claims to be the Son of God.
- “Today I have begotten You” – Acts 13:33 refers this verse to the resurrection of Jesus Christ who was begotten from the tomb and came forth in glory.
 - Revelation refers to Jesus as “the firstborn from the dead.” (Rev. 1:5)

- 2:8 – “Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations” – This verse is used by some missions agencies, but it is taken out of context.
- “nations for Your inheritance” – Satan promised to give Jesus all the kingdoms of this world if Jesus would bow to him. (Matt. 4:8-9) Jesus, instead, chose to resist the devil and wait to receive the nations from God’s hand.
 - These are the nations currently raging against the Lord and His Anointed.
- 2:9 – “break them with a rod of iron” – The sovereign and complete rule of Jesus on earth.
- Those who will not bend, must break. (Matt. 21:44)
 - This is the millennial age of Rev. 20.
 - “break” – This Hebrew word can also be translated “shepherd,” which explains the KJV translations of Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15.
 - “dash them to pieces” – Pharaohs of ancient Egypt would take clay pots and write the names of their enemies on them and then smash the pots with an iron rod before going out to battle.
 - God is going to bring peace on earth whether the people like it or not.
- 2:10 – “instructed” – The idea is “warned.”
- God “takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.” (Ezek. 33:11)
- 2:11 – “fear...trembling” – The reverence that a sovereign ruler deserves.
- 2:12 – “Kiss the Son” – This is the kiss on the hand of a peasant before a king.
- In light of the judgment to come, we now have an opportunity to repent. There is a promised blessing for those who willingly place themselves under His lordship now.
 - To make peace with the Father, kiss the Son. Salvation through the Son alone.
 - The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus, not of Himself. (John 15:26)
 - “put their trust in Him” – This is the means to the blessing of Psalm 1:1-3.

Chapter 3:

- 3:1 – “who trouble me” – David’s beloved son, Absalom. (2 Sam. 15)
- This circumstance was brought on in large part by David’s sin with Bathsheba that led to his inability to lead his household in a godly manner.
 - David becomes a type of Jesus in this: due to sin, his people rebelled against him, driving him over the Kidron to the Garden of Gethsemane. God takes David’s sin and punishment for sin to show us most clearly the cleansing work of Jesus to cover our sin. Jesus walked the same hill because of sin and rebellion too.
 - “Many are they who rise up against me” – Satan loves to pile on, like Shimei.
 - Troubles always come in flocks. It is the combination of things that really gets to us.
 - How slippery and deceitful are the many. David had the hearts of his subjects as much as ever any king had, and yet of a sudden he had lost them.
- 3:2 – “no help for him in God” – He seems God-forsaken, but it is only a lie. Nobody is ever beyond the love, mercy, and help of God. (1 Tim. 1:12-15; Rom. 8:38-39)
- David might have an inclination to believe this lie due to his guilt over sinning with Bathsheba. Adultery and murder were capital offences in Judah, but God was merciful.
 - They said the same things about Jesus. (Matt. 27:41-49)
 - “Selah” – This word is used 72 times in Psalms. It is a musical notation for a pause and/or a crescendo and serves as an opportunity to think on what had just been said.

3:3 – “But You, O Lord, are a shield for me” – David went back to the Lord, pushing through his own guilt and pain.

- David seeks the Lord despite what is being said of him that “there is no help for him in God.” (v. 2)
- We cannot get ourselves out of the mess that we put ourselves into. The hole is too deep. We have to look to someone outside our mess.
- “My glory” – There is a great need for grace to see our future glory amid present shame.

3:4 – “He heard me” – David can receive God’s grace, even after his sin.

3:5 – “I lay down and slept” – This is as Absalom is chasing him to kill him.

- The peace of Jesus truly passes all understanding. Get out of your head. (See Acts 12:6 and Exodus 33:14 for example.)
- “I awoke” – Psalm 3 is a morning psalm. (Psalm 4 is an evening psalm.)
- The Lord “gives His beloved sleep.” (Ps. 127:2) The arms of the Lord are a great place to sleep.

3:6 – “I will not be afraid” – Faith displaces fear.

- “not be afraid of ten thousands” – The psalmist will trust despite appearances and the outnumbering is only mere appearances.
- Stronger is He that is in us than they who are against us.

3:7 – “You have struck” – David leaves it to God to get them.

3:8 – “Your blessing is upon Your people” – David says this as he flees home and kingdom.

- The saints, though they are bruised, yet they are blessed.

Chapter 4:

Psalm 4 is often called “The Evening Psalm.”

- The “Chief Musician” is mentioned 55 times in Psalms.

4:1 – “Hear me when I call” – He will never cease to help as long as we cease to need.

- “You have relieved me” – Lit. “You have made a spacious place for me.”
- “distress” – Lit. “pressed into a corner, in a tight place.”
- We are not sure of the circumstances, but something is causing David to internally stress. Some trials are external; some are more internal.
- “Have mercy” – Some of David’s earlier psalms ask God to judge him according to his own righteousness. But now that he knows himself better, he gives himself to God’s mercy.

4:2 – “O you sons of men” – David is speaking on God’s behalf.

- “turn my glory to shame” – It is an exchange of glories. (Rom. 1:23)
- “falsehood” – That is lies and deceit.
- “Selah” – We too may stop while and meditate on the folly of the wicked and the grace of God.

4:3 – “the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly” – We are God’s. He is calling us into a relationship with Himself.

4:4 – “Be angry, and do not sin” – God has not asked us to be emotionless robots. It’s only a problem when the emotions prevent us from doing what He has called us to do.

- David chooses to let God defend him rather than try to defend himself.
- “Mediate within your heart” – This is opposed to calling up all your friends.
- “be still” – Lit. “hands down, or hands off.”
 - This is an act of surrender to God’s good purposes in our lives.
 - “Be still and know I am God.” (Ps. 46:10)

4:5 – “Sacrifices of righteousness” – Ps. 51:17; John 6:29; Hosea 6:6; 1 Sam. 15:22.

4:6 – “show us any good” – There were many, even among David’s own followers, who wanted to see rather than to believe. (John 6:29)

- “We walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Cor. 5:7)
- Men mistake God’s good. They look for a good that is to gratify their passions; they have no notion of any happiness that doesn’t come to them through the medium of their senses. Therefore, they reject spiritual good, and they reject the Supreme God.

4:7 – “gladness in my heart” – As Absalom is prospering and taking the kingdom to himself, David is still able to enjoy what comes to him from God’s hand.

- It is better to enjoy little than to merely have much.
- It is better to feel God’s favor one hour in our repenting souls than to sit whole ages under the warmest sunshine that this world affords. Christ in the heart is better than corn in the barn or wine in the vat.
- “grain and wine” – What madness and folly is it that the favorites of heaven should envy the men of this world, who at best do but feed upon the scraps that come from God’s table.
 - “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matt. 6:24)

4:8 – “lie down” – In thus lying down, he voluntarily gave up any guardianship of himself. There is a trial in stillness; and oftentimes the still chamber makes a larger demand upon loving trust than the battlefield.

- “and sleep” – They slumber sweetly whom faith rocks to sleep.
 - There is something here which should be inexpressibly sweet to the believer, for this shows the minuteness of God’s care, the individuality of His love; how it condescends and stoops, and acts, not only in great, but also in little spheres; not only where glory might be procured from great results, but where nothing is to be had save the gratitude and love of the poor feeble creature whose life has been protected and preserved in a period of helplessness and sleep.
- “You alone” – David’s hope is in God alone.
 - There is no real substitute for the presence of God.

Chapter 5:

5:1 – “Consider my meditation” – David is asking God to not only hear his words, but to hear his thoughts as well.

- Jesus Himself offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears. (Heb. 5:7)

- 5:2 – “my cry” – Observe the order and force of his words. These expressions all evince the urgency and energy of David’s feelings and petitions. As if he said, I cannot express myself nor make myself understood as I wish. Do Thou, therefore, understand from my feelings more than I am able to express with words.
- The Father hears His children’s cries.
 - “My King” – God is the king’s King.
 - “my God” – David, in all his sin, never left God. David failed, but he never changed gods.
 - God would say to Solomon, “your heart has not been perfect towards Me as was the heart of your father, David.” Solomon was not as loyal to the Lord as was David.
- 5:3 – “in the morning” – The idea is “first thing.” He is starting the day with the Lord.
- “direct it” – Lit. “to present it as a sacrifice.” It is the word for laying in order of the wood and the pieces of the sacrifice upon the altar, and it is used also for putting the showbread upon the table. It means just this: “I will arrange my prayer before thee;” I will lay it out upon the altar in the morning, just as the priest lays out the morning sacrifice.
 - “Present your bodies a living sacrifice.” (Rom. 12:1)
- 5:4 – “not a God who take pleasure in wickedness” – As David knew from personal experience. He had been both “bloodthirsty” (murdering Uriah) and “deceitful” (committing adultery with Bathsheba). (v. 6) David tried to avoid the conviction of God for over a year after his sin with Bathsheba to no avail.
- 5:5 – “workers of iniquity” – Sin is their job; a habitual lifestyle.
- “Depart from Me” – Ps. 6:8; Luke 13:27; Gal. 5:19-21.
 - “iniquity” – What an astonishing thing is sin, which makes the God of love and Father of mercies an enemy to His creatures, and which could only be purged by the blood of the Son of God.
- 5:6 – “destroy those who speak falsehood” – “If the Jews cursed more bitterly than the pagans, this was, I think, at least in part because they took right and wrong more seriously. For if we look at their railings we find they are usually angry not simply because these things have been done to them but because these things are manifestly wrong, are hurtful to God as well as to the victim.” (C.S. Lewis “Reflections on the Psalms.” p. 30)
- 5:7 – “multitude of Your mercy” – I cannot come there by my own merits; no, I have a multitude of sins, and therefore, I will come in the multitude of Thy mercy.
- This is the only reason David, despite his own sin, can still enter into God’s presence.
 - This is the Good News – God has provided His righteousness to cover our iniquity.
 - “worship toward your holy temple” – A man after God’s own heart will also be a man who loves God’s temple. David loved God’s temple, which was only a tent at this time.
 - “make Your way straight” – It is no small mercy to see the way of God with clear vision straight before our face. (Prov. 3:6)
- 5:8 – “Lead me, O Lord” – This is a great prayer to pray in the morning.

- 5:9 – “no faithfulness” – They are faithless hypocrites; dead on the inside and flowery on the outside.
- “throat is an open tomb” – This is the gross scene of the dead person inside exhaling the stench of sin and death.
 - This is an accurate description of the whole of the human race, not of David’s enemies only, but of all men of nature. (Rom. 3:13)
 - “From the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45; Matt. 12:34)
 - “Tongue...set on fire of hell.” (James 3:6)

5:10 – “Pronounce them guilty” – This is more prophetic than condemning.

- 5:11 – “You defend them” – It is not that there aren’t difficulties; it is just that God is willing to defend us through the trials.
- “joyful in You” – David is demonstrating the joy of the Lord despite difficult circumstances.

- 5:12 – “shield” – God Himself is the shield. (Ps. 3:3; Gen. 15:1) He is the only difference between v. 4 and v. 7, or between v. 10 and v. 11.
- There is no pride in the destruction of the wicked and in the rejoicing of those who trust, because it’s only His mercy that would provide Himself to take the beating so we could rejoice behind the shield. It is the shield that takes the brunt of the beating.

Chapter 6:

Psalm 6 – This is the first psalm of repentance; a penitential psalm.

- This psalm expresses at once the sorrow (v. 3, 6-7), the humiliation (v. 2,4), and the hatred of sin (v. 8), which are the unfailing marks of the contrite spirit when it turns to God.
 - Some place the context of this psalm at the time when David fled to Gath while fleeing from Saul.
- 6:1 – “Lord” – Jehovah. The name of God is used five times in the first four verses. David is going straight to God.
- “do not rebuke me in Your anger” – Sometimes parents need a cooling off time between a child’s offense and the meting out of discipline.
 - David must have known that he was in trouble if he started this prayer this way. But the overwhelming mark of David’s life is that he did everything before His God. David’s good, bad, victories, and sin never forced him from his Lord.
- 6:2 – “I am weak” – This could be translated, “I am one who droops, or withered like a blighted plant.” There is no pride here. He is so honest and willing to admit his lack or weakness.
- David knows that “we are dust.” (Ps. 103:14)
 - “my bones” – Lit. “the inner man.”
 - “troubled” – David is repenting of the sin...not just of the consequences.
- 6:3 – “how long?” – This should be a believer’s cry too. If we are comfortable, content, and satisfied with this world, we have it in way too high esteem and hold heaven in much too low esteem.
- 6:4 – “Return, O Lord” – David is seeking God’s presence.
- “for Your mercies’ sake” – David is crying out on God’s mercy, not on his merit. If we turn to justice, what plea can we urge? But if we turn to mercy, we may still cry, notwithstanding the greatness of our guilt, “Save me...”

6:6 – “tears” – This “man after God’s own heart” cries and hurts. (Ps. 56:8)

6:8 – “Depart from me” – Separation is a necessary step to repentance.

- Repentance is a practical thing. It is not enough to bemoan the desecration of the temple of the heart; we must scourge out the buyers and sellers and overturn the tables of the money-changers. A pardoned sinner will hate the sins which cost the Savior His blood.

6:9 – “The Lord has heard” – Past tense.

- “the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping” – It is not so much the weeping eye God respects as the broken heart; yet I would be loath to stop their tears who can weep. God stood looking on Hezekiah’s tears; “I have seen they tears.” (Isa. 38:5)
- “Lord will receive my prayer” – David is confident in God’s care for him because God has always been faithful to care for David. Here is past experience used for future encouragement.

Chapter 7:

Psalm 7 – “Meditation” – (Heb. “Shiggaion”) Lit. “heart’s cry.”

- The only other Shiggaion in the Bible is in Habakkuk 3.
- “concerning the words” – This is the psalm of the slandered saint.
- “Cush” – means “black.”
 - Cush is one of those children of men, children of Belial indeed, whom David complains of (1 Sam. 26:19), that made mischief between him and Saul.

7:1 – “in You I put my trust” – Whatever may be the emergency of our condition, we shall never find it amiss to retain our reliance upon God.

7:2 – “tear me like a lion” – The devil is pictured as a lion in 1 Pet. 5:8.

- “Rending me in pieces” – David is being shredded by this man’s words.
 - Slander leaves a slur, even if it be wholly disproved.
 - If someone will slander another in your presence, be assured they will also slander you in another’s presence. Avoid it altogether.

7:3 – “if I have done this” – David is not trying to escape a just punishment.

7:4 – “If I have paid evil to him” – David had no design against Saul’s life, but spared him twice. (1 Sam. 24:4; 26:12)

- To do evil for good is human corruption, to do good for good is civil retribution, but to do good for evil is Christian perfection.
- “‘It is Mine to avenge,’ says the Lord.” (Rom. 12:19-21)

7:6 – “You have commanded” – David, in order to pray aright, reposes himself on the Word and promise of God; and the import of his exercise is this: Lord, I am not led by ambition or foolish, headstrong passion, or depraved desire, inconsiderately to ask from You whatever is pleasing to my flesh; but it is the clear light of Your Word which directs me, and upon it I securely depend.

- 7:9 – “establish the just” – The world can be confusing at times. We live in a world of evil, and even at times in this world, evil can be counted as good and good counted as evil. It is then that the only option left is to turn judgment over to the Lord who sees clear to the heart. One day this will all be set right, even though we cannot see it right now.
- “God tests the hearts” – Only God can righteously judge another. (1 Cor. 4:3-5)
 - “the hearts and minds” – God even sees our motivation.
- 7:11 – “God is angry” – The original expression here is very forcible. The true idea of it appears to be “to froth, or foam at the mouth with indignation.”
- 7:12 – “If he does not turn back” – There is room for the wicked to repent. Even though angry, God is still merciful.
- 7:14 – “brings forth” – A phrase that speaks of childbirth. This man gives birth to iniquity.
- He is full of it, pained until he can carry it out; he longs to work his will; he is full of pangs until his evil intent is executed.
 - “conceives trouble” – He was not put upon it or forced into it, it was voluntary.
- 7:15 – “fallen into the ditch” – The wicked slanderers will ultimately fall into their own pit.
- Slanderers will cut themselves off from all the upright people in their lives.
- 7:17 – “praise the Lord” – David will choose to remain focused on the Lord.
- “His righteousness” – Our righteousness is His righteousness that He gives to us as a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - “Lord Most High” – (Heb. El Elyon”) The name of God used in Gen. 14:18-22.

Chapter 8:

- Psalms 8 – “instrument of Gath” – (Heb. “Al Gittith”) This seems to be a reference to the winepress.
- It may be that this was a psalm of the harvest season, around the Feast of Tabernacles.
- 8:1 – “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth” – This phrase bookends this psalm. (v. 9)
- David couches the question, “what is man?” (v. 4) directly between the praise, “how excellent is Your name.” (v. 1, 9)
 - David chooses to understand man in light of the Lord, rather than in light of the creation.
 - “LORD” – Lit. “Yahweh.” The covenant-keeping God is Israel; the I-Am-that-I-Am.
 - “Lord” – Lit. “Adonai.” This is the name of a master, or sovereign ruler.
 - “above the heavens” – Scientists tell us that the universe is 24 billion light years wide, that it is 30 trillion miles to the closest star, 90 million miles to the sun, and the sun is large enough in which to fit 1,200,000 earths.
 - Isa. 40:12 tells us God laid out the universe with the span of His hand.
- 8:2 – “babes and nursing infants” – In Matt. 21:16, Jesus quotes this verse to show the Pharisees that the children were seeing reality before they could.
- A child is nothing compared to the span of the heavens, but God has given them the ability to grasp the truth about Him.
 - Jesus said that unless you accept the kingdom of God as a little child, you don’t get in. (Matt. 18:3; 11:25)

- 8:3 – “I consider Your heavens” – David, as a shepherd, would have had many opportunities to see and consider the heavens.
- The carnal mind sees God in nothing, not even in spiritual things like His Word and ordinances. The spiritual mind sees Him in everything, even in natural things, in looking on the heavens and the earth and all the creatures.
- 8:4 – “What is man?” – The immensity of the universe puts this question in proper perspective.
- Perhaps there are no rational beings throughout the universe among whom pride would appear more unseemly and incompatible than in man, considering the situation in which he is placed.
 - “mindful of him” – Lit. “remember him.” (Gen. 8:1)
 - Psalms tells us that the number of God’s thoughts toward us are as many as the sands on the sea and only good continually. (Ps. 40:5) This is a marvelous thing, that God thinks upon men and remembers them continually.
 - “son of man” – This is the first mention of this phrase in the Bible.
 - “that You visit him” – Hebrews 2:6-8 uses this verse to speak of the condescension of Jesus. (Phil. 2:5-8)
- 8:5 – “made him a little lower than the angels” – The idea is, ‘for the time being.’
- This is in contrast to the scientists who want to tell us that we are just a little higher than the monkeys.
 - It is a mysterious thing, and one to which we scarcely allude, that there has arisen a redeemer of fallen man, but not of fallen angels.
 - Jesus died at the hands of His creation.
- 8:6 – “dominion” – This does not make us brothers and sisters with the creation, but stewards over it.
- “put all things under his feet” – We do not yet see all creation subject to humans, but we do see Jesus. (Heb. 2:9)
 - Paul refers to this verse in 1 Cor. 15:27.
- 8:8 – “paths of the seas” – The sea currents give us our modern-day shipping routes.
- 8:9 – “Your name” – God’s name speaks of God’s nature.
- “the earth” – Why would this God bother with this earth?

Chapter 9:

Psalms 9 and 10 are given together as one whole psalm in the Septuagint.

- Psalm 9 talks of the unbelievers outside the nation of Israel. Psalm 10 speaks of the unbeliever within the nation of Israel.

Psalm 9 – “Death of the Son” – This may also be translated “the Champion,” speaking of Goliath. This seems like the most likely understanding of the context of this psalm.

- This could also refer to the loss of David’s son as a punishment to his adultery with Bathsheba.

9:1 – “I will” – This phrase occurs 4 times in vv. 1-2.

- “I will praise You” – The overthrow of the foe is viewed as complete and the song flows with sacred fullness of delight.
- “with my whole heart” – A half-hearted attitude will not touch heaven or effect earth.
- “tell of” – This phrase is translated “declare” in v. 14. The praise of God in the Psalter is rarely a private matter between the psalmist and the Lord. It is usually a public celebration of God’s holy virtues or His saving acts or gracious bestowal of blessings.
- Them that honor God, God will honor in turn; if we be willing to talk of His deeds, He will give us enough to talk about.

9:2 – “I will sing praise” – His praise is in response to God’s work in his life.

- “Most High” – (Heb. “El Elyon”)

9:4 – “You have” – This phrase occurs 4 times in vv. 4-5.

- “maintained my right” – He defends us, we don’t defend Him. He is our shield.
- “sat on the throne” – This is a testimony of God’s victory over the unbelieving world.

9:8 – “He shall judge” – Judgment day is a definite day.

- “judge the world in righteousness” – This is in contrast to the judges of this world.
- Paul refers to this verse in his address at Athens. (Acts 17:31)

9:9 – “The Lord also will be a refuge” – The theme verse of The Refuge youth center ministry.

9:10 – “those who know Your name will put their trust in You” – Faith is an intelligent grace; though there can be knowledge without faith, yet there can be no faith without knowledge. So necessary is knowledge to the being of faith, that the Scriptures do sometimes baptize faith by the name of knowledge. Isa. 53:11 – “By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many.”

- We never trust a man until we know him.
- The Bible doesn’t just call us to a knowledge of facts, but to the knowledge of a person. (The Greek word “epignosis” means “to know by experience.”)
- “not forsaken” – David can say this despite the inequality, iniquity, and persecution at the hands of the unbelieving world.

9:14 – “tell of all Your praise” – We must not overlook David’s object in desiring mercy; it is God’s glory. Saints are not so selfish as to look only to themselves.

9:15 – “the net which they hid” – Haman being hung on his own gallows is a perfect example.

- 9:16 – “The Lord is known by the judgment He executes” – God often makes Himself known by bringing judgment into one’s life.
- “the wicked is snared” – One of the themes of the psalms is that nobody gets away with anything.
 - Haman and Absalom are examples of those who were destroyed by being caught in their own schemes.
 - The wages that sin bargains with the sinner are life, pleasure, and profit; but the wages it pays him with are death, torment, and destruction.
- 9:17 – “the nations that forget God” – There are whole nation of such; the forgetters of God are far more numerous than the profane. Forgetfulness seems a small sin, but it brings eternal wrath upon the man who lives and dies in it.
- Many aren’t bad; they just don’t care. The opposite of love is not hate, it is apathy; simply not caring at all. And Satan seems to use this in the US where the persecution of choice is not communism, but materialism.
- 9:18 – “the needy shall not always be forgotten” – This goes against how we feel much of the time.
- 9:20 – “know themselves to be but men” – This puts it all into perspective.
- “men” – (Heb. “enosh”) Lit. “mortal.”
 - This psalm ends with a prayer that they may know themselves to be but miserable, frail, and dying men.
 - Ps. 90:12 – “So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.”
 - Ps. 103:14 – “He remembers that we are dust.”

Chapter 10:

Psalm 10 – The question of the prosperity of the wicked. (Ps. 73)

- This psalm describes the mind, the manners, the works, the words, the feelings, and the fate of the ungodly with so much propriety, fullness, and light.
- 10:1 – “hide in times of trouble” – The psalmist feels like God is hiding Himself.
- We can struggle with God’s timing in difficult things. Knowing God’s will can actually increase the struggle in the life of the believer (like Moses before Pharaoh or like Habakkuk concerning Babylon).
 - God hides Himself because this is to be found a “needs-be,” not only for trial, but for heaviness of heart under trial. If we were carried in the arms of God over every stream, where would be the trial, and where the experience, which trouble is meant to teach us?
 - “times of trouble” – These should be times of confidence; fixedness of heart on God would prevent fears of heart. “Trusting in the Lord, his heart is established; he shall not be afraid.” (Ps. 112:7)
 - Troubles can cause us to sink our roots deep into the Lord. (Ps. 1:3)
- 10:2 – “pride” – This is the sin at the heart of all other sins.
- Pride consists in an unduly exalted opinion of oneself. It is therefore, impatient of a rival, hates a superior, and cannot endure a master. Beware lest you indulge it imperceptibly, for it is perhaps, of all sins, the most secret, subtle, and insinuating.
 - “the poor” – Throughout Scripture, God stands for the orphan, the widow, and the poor.
 - “Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised” – “With the same measure you use...” (Matt. 7:1-2) “You reap what you sow...” (Gal. 6:7)

- 10:3 – “blesses the greedy” – We can celebrate a “win-at-all-costs” attitude when we praise those who have become successful by trampling others to get there.
- “the greedy” – If a man is a fornicator, or a drunkard, we put him out of the church; but who ever read of church discipline against that idolatrous wretch – the covetous man?
- 10:4 – “his proud countenance does not seek God” – He that is proud of his clothes and parentage is not so contemptible in God’s eyes as he that is proud of his abilities and so scorns to submit to God’s methods for his salvation by Christ, and by His righteousness alone.
- “his thoughts” – We have durable thoughts of transitory things and flitting thoughts of a durable and eternal good.
- 10:5 – “prospering” – The prosperity of the wicked can trouble a person of faith.
- 10:6 – “He has said” – This is one of the three thoughts of the wicked in this psalm.
- This is the wrong conclusion that an unbeliever or backslidden believer draws from God’s long-suffering. But Peter tells us that “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Pet. 3:9)
 - “never be in adversity” – The ungodly man believes his sin will never hurt him.
 - The proud man either crumbles in adversity or avoids it altogether by picking on the weak.
- 10:9 – “the poor” – Oppression of the poor results from rejecting the Lord.
- The ungodly person believes they can take advantage of the poor without any consequences.
- 10:10 – “helpless” – It is cowardliness that causes the wicked to take advantage of the poor and helpless.
- 10:11 – “He has said” – This is the second thought of the wicked in this psalm.
- “God has forgotten” – God forbears punishing; therefore men forbear repenting.
- 10:13 – “He has said” – This is the third thought of the wicked in this psalm.
- “not require an account” – God’s justice demands judgment on this wickedness.
- 10:14 – “You have seen...You observe trouble and grief...repay it by Your hand” – David answers the three thoughts of the wicked. (v. 6,11,13)
- 10:15 – “find none” – There is none left because it has all been purged.
- 10:16 – “The Lord is King” – This is a statement of faith. Such confidence and faith must appear to the world strange and unaccountable
- 10:17 – “Lord, You have heard” – The God who hears is more powerful than the wicked who hurt.
- 10:18 – “man of the earth” – The ungodly, wicked, and worldly man.
- “justice to the fatherless and the oppressed” – There will be a day when God will vindicate the oppressed and recompense the oppressor.

Chapter 11:

Psalm 11 – This seems to be written when David was being chased by Saul through Judea.

- At this time, David has been anointed, but has yet to come into his rightful position.

11:1 – “trust” – Even David, at times, was tempted to distrust God.

- David would rather dare the danger than exhibit a distrust in the Lord.
- “to my soul” – The temptation cuts deep.
- “your mountain” – David is fleeing to the mountains, but trusting in the Lord.
 - In temptations of inward trouble and terror, it’s not convenient to dispute the matter with Satan.

11:2 – “look” – This word suggests that these counselors are walking by sight and evaluating the situation from the human perspective.

- “their arrow” – For David, these were real arrows.
- “secretly” – Always in private, behind closed doors, and behind your back.

11:3 – “the foundations are destroyed” – A house built on a faulty foundation is bound to fall.

- David can either trust in the government of man or in the government of God.
- Matt. 7:24-27 – The man who built on the rock heard and did God’s words.
- “What can the righteous do?” – This is spoken by those trying to discourage David.
 - To stand firm while others attack or hurt us, is the strength of Christ.

11:4 – “The Lord is in His holy temple” – The Lord is still in control, despite the wrecked foundations.

- David’s response to this despair is to turn to the Lord.
- “The just shall live by his faith.” (Hab. 2:4)
- There is yet a God in heaven to be sought to when a people’s deliverance is thrown beyond the help of human policy or power.
- “the Lord’s throne is in heaven” – If we trust this King of kings, is not this enough? Cannot He deliver us without any cowardly retreat?
- “His eyelids test” – As a man squints to perceive something small or distant, so God examines the ways of the wicked.
 - “His eyes are as a flame of fire.” (Rev. 1:14) Fire either consumes or purifies.

11:5 – “The Lord tests the righteous” – He does not hate them, but only tries them. Sons get disciplined. (Heb. 12:7)

- As a bear came to David after a lion, and a giant after a bear, and a king after a giant, and Philistines after a king.

11:6 – “a burning wind” – Some think there is in the Hebrew an allusion to that burning, suffocating wind which blows across the Arabian deserts; the Sirocco.

- “their cup” – The wrath of God poured out on unbelievers. (Ps. 75, 78; Jer. 23; Rev. 14)
 - Jesus took this cup for us. (Matt. 26:39)

Chapter 12:

Psalm 12 – This is a prayer for help when it seems that all men are faithless and every tongue false. It was possibly written regarding Saul’s killing of the priests of Nob as David fled.

- There are three speakers in this psalm: David, the wicked, and the Lord.

12:1 – “Help, Lord” – It would be better for a man to be among lions than among liars.

- “the faithful disappear” – It is very discouraging when we see the faithful fall.
 - At one time, Elijah thought he was the only godly man left in the nation. (1 Kings 19:10)
 - The attempt to speak what is agreeable is often made at the expense of the truth.

12:2 – “idly” – Lit. “lies.” These are empty words.

- “flattering lips” – Sometimes we can mistake talk/promises for faithfulness.
 - Flattery is very dangerous because it is manipulation that appeals to the flesh.
 - He who puffs up another’s heart has nothing better than wind in his own.
- “double heart” – Lit. “a heart and a heart.” We would say “two-faced.”
 - There is no such stuff to make a cloak of as religion, nothing so fashionable, nothing so profitable; it is a livery wherein a wise man may serve two masters, God and the world, and make a gainful service by either.
 - One heart for the church, another for the change; one for Sundays, another for working-days; one for the King, another for the pope. A man without a heart is a wonder, but a man with two hearts is a monster.

12:3 – “cut off all flattering lips” – That would make a big pile. ☺

- None are so detestably domineering as the little creatures who creep into offices by cringing to the great; those are bad times, indeed, in which these obnoxious beings are numerous and powerful.

12:4 – “Our lips are our own” – It is a common idea that we have the right to say what we want.

- True faith tames the tongue. (James 3:17)

12:5 – “the poor” – The Lord will plead the cause of the poor.

- “I will arise” – God moves in great contrast to the flattery of the unfaithful.
- “says the Lord” – Now God speaks.

12:6 – “pure” – This is a word that refers to the smelting furnace. It means “all of one substance” and speaks of consistent truth without any flattery.

- “silver tried in a furnace of earth” – The Bible has passed through the furnace of persecution, literary criticism, philosophic doubt, and scientific discovery, and has lost nothing but those human interpretations which clung to it as alloy to precious ore. Test the word of God and find it true.
 - Truth is thus precious.

12:8 – “vileness” – Lit. “cheapness.” This stands opposed to godly character.

- “vileness is exalted” – When the means of building something is ungodly, then ungodly people will be attracted to it.
 - This is only a temporary exaltation.

Chapter 13:

Psalm 13 – David seems to have been suffering from a serious illness at this time. (v. 3) If David dies, it would give reason for the enemies of God to rejoice.

- This psalm contains a complaint, a prayer, and a praise.

13:1 – “How long?” – This question appears four times in two verses. He wants God to hurry.

- This might be the complaint of the impatient.
- “forget me forever” – God cannot forget.
- “See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.” (Isa. 49:16)
- “For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” (Heb. 13:5)

13:3 – “Consider” – The tone changes from complaint to prayer.

13:4 – “moved” – Lit. “to waver, to be agitated, to totter and shake.”

13:5 – “trusted in Your mercy” – Everything is set straight here.

- There are sets here: “I have trusted...Your mercy,” “My heart shall rejoice...Your salvation,” and “I will sing...He has dealt bountifully.” This is all set in the context of relationship.
- “He has dealt bountifully with me” – He can say that even though he feels ignored by God.
- What greater glory can there be than to be made conformable to our head, Christ? And this is done by affliction.

Chapter 14:

Psalm 14 – This psalm is nearly identical to Psalm 53.

14:1 – “fool” – (Heb. “nabal”) Lit. “the brutish, stubborn animal.” The Hebrew carries the signification of fading, dying, or falling away, like a plant that has lost all that juice that made it lovely and useful.

- The Hebrew words rendered “fool” in Psalms denote one who is morally deficient.
- With no objective reality, no truth, and ultimately no good or bad, right or wrong, it is no surprise that the fool is morally sufficient.
- “said in his heart” – He is a fool because he acts as if there is no God, even if he says with his mouth that there is a God.
- “no God” – This is the Bible’s definition of a fool, no matter how smart they are.
- “The heavens declare the glory of God.” (Ps. 19:1)
- Even the demons acknowledge that there is a god. (Matt. 8:29; James 2:19)
- Everybody worships something.
- “They are corrupt” – A denial of the existence of God leads people to follow the selfish and corrupt desires of their own heart as God gives them over. (Rom. 1:24,26,28)

14:3 – “none who does good” – Paul quotes this verse in Ps. 14 to speak of the hopeless depravity of fallen man apart from Jesus Christ. (Rom. 3:10)

- “does good” – Paul interprets this phrase as “seeks after God” in Rom. 3.
- “none” – This includes all of us.

14:4 – “eat up My people” – They use people to meet their own desires.
- They are ravening and extorting wolves in sheep’s clothing. (Matt. 7:15-20)
- If the world hated Christ, it is not wonder that it hates us. (John 15:18)

14:5 – “God is with the generation of the righteous” – Despite the claims of the fool.

14:6 – “the Lord is his refuge” – This sweetly illustrates God’s care of His poor, not merely the poor in spirit, but literally the poor and lowly ones, the oppressed and the injured.

14:7 – “come out of Zion” – Our prayer is for Jesus to “come quickly.” (Rev. 22:20)

- “When” – Not “if.” God will one day declare Himself.
 - The coming of Messiah was the desire of the godly in all ages.
- “brings back the captivity” – Lit. “to restore the fortunes, to radically change circumstances from bad to very good.”
 - Jesus led captivity captive. (Eph. 4:8)

Chapter 15:

Psalm 15 – This psalm may be connected with David’s failed attempt to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. (2 Sam. 6) He had to search the Scriptures to find his error.

- It is probable that this psalm is in some way connected with Psalm 24, to which it bears a striking resemblance.

15:1 – “who may abide” – Where angels bow with veiled faces, how shall man be able to worship at all?

- Psalm 14:1-3 tells us “there is none who does good.” Hence the need for a substitutionary atonement.
- “dwell in Your holy hill?” – This question regards fellowship, not salvation.
 - God is looking for character, not skill.

15:2 – “walks...works...speaks” – Observe the accepted man’s walk, work, and word.

- When the wheels of a clock move within, the hands on the dial will move without. You can tell a tree by its fruit. (Matt. 7:20)
- “uprightly” – This refers to “soundness of character, integrity, and complete loyalty to God.”
- “works righteousness” – A righteous man may make a righteous work, but no work of an unrighteous man can make him righteous.

15:3 – “not backbite with his tongue” – James 3:6-12.

15:4 – “honors those who fear the Lord” – a sinner in a golden chain and silken robes is no more to be compared with a saint in rags.

- “swears...and does not change” – A man who keeps his word, even when it hurts.
 - “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” (Matt. 5:37)
 - Jesus is the ultimate example of one who swore to His own hurt and did not change.

- 15:5 – “put out his money at usury” – The demanding of excessive and grinding interest is a sin to be detested. The taking of the usual and current interest in a commercial country is not contrary to the law of love.
- The end for which the law was formed was that man should not cruelly oppress the poor, who ought rather to receive sympathy and compassion. (Lev. 25:35-36)
 - “usury” – The Hebrew word “neshek,” which David employs, comes from a Hebrew root word which means “to bite.”
 - “does” – These things should be working themselves out in our lives.
 - “never be moved” – This is true steadiness and strength.

Chapter 16:

Psalm 16 – Spurgeon calls this “The Golden Psalm.” (“Michtam” may mean “golden.”)

- This is a messianic psalm. (The last 3 verses are used by Peter to refer to Jesus in Acts 2:25-28 and by Paul in Acts 13:35-38).
 - It has been the usual plan of commentators to apply the Psalm both to David, to the saints, and to the Lord Jesus, but we shall venture to believe that in it “Christ is all.”
- 16:1 – “Preserve me” – This can also be “keep me, save me, or guard me.”
- David was often being pursued to be destroyed, whether by Goliath, Saul, or Absalom.
 - “my” – This personal pronoun is used over a dozen times in this psalm.
 - “my trust” – Committing himself to the sovereign care of God for his life.
- 16:2 – “You are my Lord” – Submitting to the sovereign rule of God in his life.
- “My goodness” – As Jesus extends it to all the saints. The words should be understood of what the Messiah was doing for men.
 - My goodness, “tobhathi” – “my bounty” is not to Thee. What I am doing can add nothing to Thy Divinity. Thou art not providing this astonishing sacrifice because Thou canst derive any excellence from it, but this bounty extends to all the saints.
 - “nothing apart from You” – He is recognizing his dependence on God.
- 16:3 – “the saints” – These sanctified ones, although still upon the earth, partake of the results of Jesus’ mediatorial work, and by His goodness are made what they are.
- “in whom is all my delight” – Those who love God will love what He loves.
- 16:4 – “another god” – “They who multiply gods multiply griefs to themselves, for whosoever things one god too little will find two too many, and yet hundreds not enough” – Matthew Henry.
- “drink offerings of blood” – The grossness of idol worship.
 - “take up their names on my lips” – David will not participate in their idolatry by even uttering their names aloud.
- 16:5 – “the portion of my inheritance” – There is a cost to seeking God as the only inheritance. There is a forsaking of all other inheritances.
- “my inheritance and my cup” – If He didn’t take the cup, He couldn’t get the inheritance.

16:6 – “The lines” – This may refer to our heritage.

- “lines have fallen to me in pleasant places” – God’s promised lot for our lives will be wonderfully rich, no matter what and where that happens to be.
 - It may seem strange, but while no other man was ever so thoroughly acquainted with grief, it is our belief that no other man ever experienced so much joy and delight in service as Jesus.
 - Discontented spirits are as unlike Jesus as the croaking raven is unlike the cooing dove. Martyrs have been happy in dungeons.

16:7 – “My heart also instructs me” – God can bring conviction, even when we are completely alone.

- “night seasons” – The night season which the sinner chooses for his sins in the hallowed hour of quiet when believers hear the soft, still voices of heaven and the heavenly life within themselves.

16:8 – “set the Lord always before me” – To recognize the presence of the Lord is the duty of every believer. And to trust the Lord as our champion and guard is the privilege of every saint; “because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”

- David has placed his hope in the Lord.

16:9 – “my heart is glad” – This despite suffering and undeserved death.

- “My flesh” – Actual bodily resurrection.

16:10 – “not leave my soul” – Lit. “not abandon my soul.”

- “Sheol” – The OT reference to the place of the dead.
- “Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption” – This speaks of the resurrection of the Messiah. (Acts 2:25-28; 13:35)

16:11 – “the path of life” – Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. (John 14:6)

- “In Your presence is” – There it is, not there it was, nor there it will be. It is present tense.
 - In this life our joy is mixed with sorrow like a thorn under the rose.
- “fullness of joy” – David knew of the reality of heaven and the joy of it.
 - The hope of heaven is a reality to us because the Holy One overcame the grave and didn’t see corruption.
- “pleasures forevermore” – Heaven’s joys are without measure, mixture, or end.
 - Let us ease our heaviest loads of sufferings, and sweeten our bitterest cups of sorrows with the continual meditation and constant expectation of the fullness of joy in the presence of God, and of the pleasure at His right hand forevermore.

Chapter 17:

Psalm 17 – Written during one of the times David was being pursued (by Saul or Absalom).

- This is an appeal to heaven from the persecutions on earth.
- “prayer” – This is 1 of only 5 prayers of David in the Psalms.

17:1-4 – David seeks justice in the controversy.

- 17:1 – “Hear a just cause” – In difficult times, you want to know God is listening.
- “Attend to my cry” – There is a mighty power in a child’s cry to prevail with a parent’s heart.
 - The craft of the ungodly, in truth, grieves and afflicts the spiritual man more than their power and violence.
 - “not from deceitful lips” – The idea is “sincere.”
 - God wants sincere prayers.
 - There is such a thing as “feigned lips;” a contradiction between the heart and the tongue, a clamor in the voice and scoffing in the soul.
- 17:2 – “Let my vindication come” – With Jesus as our complete and all-glorious righteousness, we need not fear.
- “Your eyes look” – It is good to know that God sees and knows when David is being charged with treason against Saul.
- 17:3 – “tried me and have found nothing” – Surely the psalmist means nothing hypocritical or wicked in the sense in which his slanderers accused him.
- Jesus “is able...to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 1:24)
 - “mouth shall not transgress” – David learned to keep his mouth shut when being unjustly accused by Shimei. (2 Sam. 16)
- 17:4 – “the word of Your lips” – God’s word is truth. (John 17:17)
- 17:5-6 – David seeks the Lord’s grace to act rightly under trial.
- 17:5 – “Your paths” – David is not dictating the course of his own life. He is choosing to go God’s way, rather than trying to get God to go his way.
- 17:7-12 – David seeks protection from his foes.
- 17:7 – “by Your right hand” – David is asking God to defend him.
- 17:8 – “the apple of Your eye” – Lit. “the pupil of Your eye.”
- He is asking God to keep him in the center of His vision and as the most sensitive part of His body.
 - The all-wise Creator has placed the eye in a well-protected position; it stands surrounded by projecting bones like Jerusalem encircled by mountains.
- 17:10 – “fat hearts...speak proudly” – They are trusting in their own strength.
- Luxury and gluttony beget vain-glorious fatness of heart, which shuts up its gates against all compassionate emotions and reasonable judgment. The old proverb says that “full bellies make empty skulls,” and yet it is more true that they frequently make empty hearts.
 - “speak proudly” – Prosperity and vanity often lodge together.
- 17:11 – “surrounded us” – David was often trapped. (1 Sam. 23-27)
- 17:13-14 – David pleads for the defeat of the enemies, asking in faith.

- 17:14 – “men of the world” – This is very different from the man of God.
- “portion in this life” – We cannot have earth and heaven too for our choice and portion; wise men choose that which will last the longest.
 - Whereas thou, O Christian, who possesses nothing, art heir-apparent of heaven, co-heir with Jesus Christ, Who is the Heir of all things, and hast an infinite mass of riches laid up for thee.
 - “leave the rest” – They store up wealth, die, and leave it to another.
 - The obvious significance is, that they have enough for themselves and for their children.
- 17:15 – “see Your face in righteousness” – The full experience of God’s presence with eternal righteousness, both God’s righteousness and our righteousness.
- “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3:18)
 - God’s face was David’s treasure.
 - “satisfied when I awake in Your likeness” – This is a bittersweet notion. Sweet is the notion of God’s presence. Bitter is the notion that our satisfaction will not be complete until we get to heaven.
 - Has there ever been a human creature that could stand on earth while clothed in the flesh and say, “I am satisfied?”
 - I shall be satisfied in that day when all the angels of God shall come to see the triumphs of Jesus, and when His people shall be victorious with Him.
 - “When we see Him, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.” (1 John 3:2)

Chapter 18:

Psalm 18 – This psalm repeats the text from 2 Sam. 22:2-51.

- “from the hand of all his enemies” – Possibly looking at the events of 2 Sam. 8.
 - “from the hand of Saul” – David fled from Saul for more than 10 years. (2 Sam. 5)
- 18:1 – “I will love You” – David’s response is what God most desires.
- David has been delivered by the Lord into a broader place; he can breathe again.
 - David chooses to love God despite not being able to do for God what he would’ve liked.
 - “I...You” – Note the exquisite and subtle alteration between the I and You.
 - “love” – Lit. “to love deeply, to have compassion.”
 - “my...” – 9 times in verses 1-2.
 - “my strength” – It pleased holy David more that God was his strength than that He gave him strength; that God was his deliverer, that that he was delivered; that God was his fortress, his buckler, his horn, his high tower, than that He gave him the effect of all these. It pleased David, and it pleases all the saints more that God is their salvation, whether temporal or eternal, than that He save them: the saints look more at God than at all that is God’s.
- 18:2 – “deliverer” – This is a key word in this psalm. It is found in the title and in vv. 2, 17, 19, 43, and 48.
- “my strength” – This word is literally “my rock” (repeated in the same verse) and carries the sense of strength and immobility; my sure, unchanging, eternal confidence and support.
- 18:3 – “So shall I be saved” – David was saved in calling upon God.
- Much of the battle is won in changing our focus.

- 18:4 – “death surrounded me” – David is remembering the previous struggle and warfare.
- 18:5 – “death confronted me” – (KJV “death prevented me”) The English word “prevent” has changed its meaning in some measure since our Authorized Translation of the Bible was made. Its original meaning is “to come before.” This then carries the idea of “gone ahead of me.”
- 18:6 – “distress” – Lit. “to be in a tight place, in a corner, hemmed in.”
 - “His temple” – David is speaking of heaven. The Temple hasn’t been built yet.
- 18:7 – “the earth shook and trembled” – Observe how the most solid and immovable things feel the force of supplication. Prayer has shaken houses, opened prison doors, and made stout hearts to quail.
- 18:9 – “He bowed the heavens also” – David sees the Lord in each victory in battle.
 - “and came down” – God condescends in His power.
- 18:10 – “He flew upon the wings of the wind” – God’s deliverance often seems sudden.
 - When God comes to punish His foes and rescue His people, nothing has ever surprised His friends or foes more than the admirable swiftness with which He moves and acts.
- 18:16-19 – “He” – 7 times.
 - “me” – 9 times.
 - David sees this in light of his relationship with God.
- 18:18 – “the Lord was my support” – When Henry VIII had spoken bitterly against Martin Luther, saith Luther, “Tell the Henries, the bishops, the Turks, and the devil himself, do what they can, we are the children of the kingdom, worshippers of the true God, whom they, and such as they spit upon and crucified.”
- 18:19 – “He delighted in me” – David was convinced by God’s love for him.
 - “He made us accepted in the Beloved.” (Eph. 1:6) In Christ, we delight the heart of God.
- 18:20 – “The Lord rewarded me” – David chose to let God deliver him from Saul and God rewarded that trust with His deliverance.
 - “my righteousness” – This is an imputed righteousness. David sacrificed numerous animals while bringing the ark to Jerusalem.
 - Before God, the man after God’s own heart was a humble sinner, but before his slanderers he could with unblushing face speak of “the cleanness of his hands” and the righteousness of his life.
- 18:21 – “I have...And have not” – There is “I have” and “I have not,” both of which must be blended in a truly sanctified life; constraining and restraining grace must each take its share.
- 18:25 – “show yourself merciful” – We will reap what we sow with the Lord.
- 18:29 – “run against a troop” – David was a fierce warrior by God’s strength.

- 18:30 – “word of the Lord is proven” – David tested God’s word in the wilderness and found it faithful.
- David refused to wear Saul’s armor into battle with Goliath because he had not proved it. (1 Sam. 17:39)
- 18:31 – “who is God, except the Lord” – Who else creates, sustains, foresees, and overrules? Who but He is perfect in every attribute and glorious in every act?
- “God” – Here first in the Psalms, occurs the name “Eloah,” rendered God. It occurs more than 50 times in the Scriptures, but only 4 times in the Psalms. It is the singular of Elohim. Many have supposed that this name specially refers to God as an object of religious worship. That idea may well be prominent in this place.
- 18:33 – “my high places” – The treacherous heights.
- It is easy to settle into mediocrity, but it isn’t what we were made for.
- 18:34 – “make war” – We are to make war too. (Eph. 6:12)
- “bend a bow of bronze” – The picture is God reaching around us to strengthen and steady us in the pulling of the bowstring. These bows could scarcely be bent by the arms alone.
- 18:35 – “the shield” – It is the shield of faith in Eph. 6:16.
- “Your gentleness” – In light of God’s power and majesty (v. 7-15), it is still God’s gentleness that has had the greatest impact on David’s life.
 - “Gentleness” could also be translated “goodness, or humility.” God’s gentleness equates with His condescension from v. 9.
 - It is God’s making Himself little which is the cause of our being made great.
- 18:41 – “Even to the Lord” – Sometimes, those who aren’t believers will go to the God of those believers to try to destroy those believers. Part of the struggle, then, is simply to know what the sides are – which group is right before God.
- 18:42 – “beat them” – The time of God’s gentleness will end for some.
- 18:43 – “delivered me from the strivings of the people” – After time, cities would rather surrender to David than fight him.
- “the head of the nations” – This might be speaking of David when he oversaw the victory at Ziklag and was given the crown of the king of the city.
- 18:45 – “frightened from their hideouts” – One Jewish scholar interprets it, “They shall fear for the prisons in which I will throw them and keep them confined.”
- 18:46 – “The Lord lives!” – We serve no inanimate, imaginary, or dying God. We serve a real and living God.
- “my salvation” – “So great a salvation.” (Heb. 2:3)
- 18:50 – “descendants forevermore” – God promised David an eternal dynasty.

Chapter 19:

Psalm 19 – “God revealed in nature, in Scripture, and in experience – sky, Scripture, and soul.”

- He is wisest who reads both the world-book (v. 1-6) and the Word-book (v. 7-8) as two volumes of the same work and feels concerning them, “My Father wrote them both.”

19:1 – “heavens declare the glory of God” – The creation speaks of a Creator. The design of the creation speaks of a Designer.

- “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so they are without excuse.” (Rom. 1:20)
- The modern debate between creation and evolution has boiled down to Intelligent Design. Many scientists would rather believe that human life started from extraterrestrial life than to believe that we were created by God.
- “declare” – God is speaking. (Heb. 1:1-2)
 - The tense of the verbs in the first two verses is in the present tense. It is literally “The heavens are declaring the glory of God...the firmament is displaying...”
- “the firmament shows His handiwork” – He set the heavens by the “span of His hands.” (Isa. 40:12)

19:2-4 – “Day unto day...no speech nor language...line has gone out through all the world” – The preaching of the heavens is wonderful in three respects: 1. As preaching all the night and all the day without intermission (v. 2), 2. As preaching in every kind of language (v. 3), and 3. As preaching in every part of the world, and in every parish of every part, and in every place of every parish (v. 4).

19:2 – “Day unto day” – It is also amazing that it all keeps going.

- “reveals knowledge” – God provides a testimony to man, not to the animals or any other part of creation.

19:5 – “Which is like a bridegroom” – The Sun of Righteousness is rising. (Mal. 4:2)

19:6 – “circuit” – This speaks of the path of the sun through the earth’s sky.

- “nothing hidden” – Adam tried hiding. Only sin would make one want to try to hide from God. (Heb. 4:13)

19:7 – “The law of the Lord” – This refers to the whole run and rule of sacred Writ: the Bible.

- “The law of the Lord is perfect” – The universe communicates that there is a God, but it doesn’t reveal the way of salvation. That takes spiritual revelation.
 - “And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?...So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10:14,17)
- “perfect” – The Scripture gives us a clearer picture of God than does nature.
- “converting the soul” – The great means of the conversion of sinners is the Word of God, and the more closely we keep to it in our ministry the more likely are we to be successful. It is God’s Word rather than man’s comment on God’s Word which is made mighty with souls. (2 Tim. 3:15)

- 19:8 – “the statutes of the Lord” – These aren’t man’s statutes that people try to find support from the Bible for. (Mark 7:8)
- “enlightening the eyes” – “But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.” (1 Cor. 2:15)
- 19:9 – “fear of the Lord is clean” – A reverential fear of God will drive us to purity.
- God’s love casts out the fear of torment (1 John 4:18), but not the fear of awe and reverence.
 - “enduring forever” – Nothing else here endures forever.
 - “judgments of the Lord are true” – He gives us warnings in the Scriptures that are in line with His creation.
- 19:11 – “great reward” – This implies that the word of God is more valuable than money or sweet food.
- 19:12-13 – “Cleanse me...Keep me...” – The grace of God both covers our sin and keeps us from sinning.
- 19:12 – “Cleanse me from secret faults” – This was a principle text of the Reformers against the auricular confession of the Roman Catholics.
- “Cleanse me” – The knowledge of God in the word impacts our life in experience.
 - “secret faults” – The heart is so deceitful that we can sin without even realizing it. (Jer. 17:9)
 - He best knows himself who best knows the Word.
 - The law of the Lord is so holy that forgiveness must be prayed for, even for hidden sins.
 - Hypocrisy is a hard game to play at, for no man is more miserable than he who sins secretly, and yet tries to preserve a character.
 - The Scripture doth often command that duty of searching and trying, of examining and communing with our hearts.
- 19:13 – “Keep back Your servant” – David saith not “cleanse,” but “keep back.” We may then be kept back from them.
- It is not our grace, our prayer, or our watchfulness that keeps us, but it is the power of God, His right arm, that supports us.
 - “presumptuous sins” – These are sins that one expects to get away with.
 - The Bible makes a difference between secret faults and presumptuous sins. It is remarkable that though an atonement was provided under the Jewish law for every kind of sin, there was this one exception: “But the soul that sins presumptuously shall have an atonement, it shall be cut off from the midst of My people.” (Num. 15:30)
 - “have dominion over me” – Willful sin can lead to a hardening of our heart that ends with it having dominion over us.
 - David’s deliberate sin in multiplying wives yielded his greatest sin as he committed adultery with Bathsheba.
 - “great transgression” – The great transgression – the blasphemy of the Spirit – is willfully rejecting God and His way when all is made clear.
 - Take special heed of those sins that come near to the sin against the Holy Ghost; and these are, hypocrisy, taking only the outward profession of religion, and so dissembling and mocking of God; sinning willfully against conviction of conscience, and against great light and knowledge, sinning presumptuously with a high hand.

- 19:14 – “words of my mouth” – The words of the mouth are a mockery if the heart doesn’t meditate.
- “meditation of my heart” – This refers to not just what is said, but what is thought as well.
 - God can see these meditations.

Chapter 20:

Psalm 20 – “The Prayer before the Battle.” This is a national anthem to be sung at the outbreak of war.

- This is a psalm to encourage leaders.
 - As leaders, our battles are won as we kneel before the King before entering the warfare.
- 20:1 – “Lord answer you in the day of trouble” – What a mercy that we may pray in the day of trouble, and what a still more blessed privilege that no trouble can prevent the Lord from hearing us.
- All the days of Christ were days of trouble.
 - “the name of the God of Jacob defend you” – The more that they know of His name, that is, of His goodness, mercy, truth, power, wisdom, justice, etc., so may they the more boldly pray unto Him, not doubting but that He will be answerable unto His name. (v. 5)
 - “defend you” – Lit. “raise you to a high, secure place.”
- 20:2 – “send you help from the sanctuary” – They seek help not out of the armory, or of the treasury, or of the battery, but we turn to the sanctuary.
- Here we see the nature of true faith, that it causes us to see help in heaven, and so to pray for it when there is none to be seen in the earth.
 - “strengthen you out of Zion” – “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Prov. 14:34)
- 20:3 – “remember all your offerings” – The offerings only mean something to God when they are given with a sincere and obedient heart.
- Before war, kings offered sacrifices, upon the acceptance of which they depended for success.
 - “accept” – Lit. “turn to ashes.” God displayed His approval by sending fire upon the sacrifice rather than upon the worshipper.
 - “burnt sacrifice” – This is the sacrifice of consecration.
- 20:4 – “your purpose” – “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10)
- 20:5 – “rejoice in your salvation” – We should fixedly resolve that come what may, we will rejoice in the saving arm of the Lord Jesus. The people in this psalm, before the king went to battle, felt sure of victory and therefore began to rejoice beforehand.
- 20:7 – “chariots” – The most advanced military equipment of the day; the war-chariot, armed with scythes, mowed down men like grass.
- The chariot was the boast and glory of the neighboring nations, but the saints considered the name of Jehovah to be a far better defense.
 - Sometimes it is easier to trust God when God is all you have.
- 20:9 – “Save, Lord” – He is letting God be his defense.

Chapter 21:

Psalm 21 – “The Prayer after the Battle.”

- There is not one who consents to the application of the preceding psalm to Christ in His trouble, who will fail to recognize in this, Christ in His triumph.

21:1 – “The king” – Jesus is a royal personage. The question, “are you a king then?” received a full answer from the Savior’s lips: “Thou sayest that I am a king.” (John 18:37)

- “Your strength” – Not in strength alone is there matter of joy; strength, not to smite us down, but strength to deliver, this is the joyful side.
- “greatly shall he rejoice” – David turns God’s deliverance back to Him in praise.
 - Sometimes the flow of God’s blessing stops at this point.
 - Being “unthankful” is a mark of the people of the last days. (2 Tim. 3:2)
 - If this applies to Jesus, we must recognize that the rejoicing of our risen Lord must, like His agony, be unutterable. “For the joy which was set before Him, He endured the cross.” (Heb. 12:2)

21:2 – “the request of his lips” – The request is the “salvation” of v. 1.

- God answers prayer. The remembrance of answered prayers strengthens us for the battle ahead.

21:3 – “meet him with the blessings of goodness” – “Meet” is translated “preventest” in KJV. The word “prevent” formerly signified to precede or go before. Mercy, in the case of many of us, ran before our desires and prayers, and it ever outruns our endeavors and expectancies, and even our hopes are left to lag behind.

- It is no new thing for God to walk in a way of preventing love and mercy with the children of men. God’s grace keeps us from ourselves.
- A large portion of our blessing is given us before our asking or seeking. Existence, reason, intellect, birth in a Christian land, the calling of our nation to the knowledge of Christ, and Christ Himself, with many other things, are unsought bestowed on men, as was David’s right to the throne bestowed on him.

21:5 – “His glory is great” – If there be a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory for His humble followers, what must there be for our Lord Himself?

21:6 – “forever” – An allusion to the Messianic King to come through David’s line, and eternal life through Him.

21:7 – “though the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved” – Mercy and grace maintain the believer.

21:8 – “find all Your enemies” – Confidence for future battles.

- Who may abide the day of His coming? If the words, “I am He,” overthrew the soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18:6), though spoken with extreme gentleness, how will it be when His indignation bursts forth, when it falls upon His enemies like a thunderbolt and reduces them to dust?

- 21:9 – “make them as a fiery oven” – They shall not only be cast into a furnace of fire (Matt. 13:42), but He shall make them themselves as a fiery oven or furnace. They shall be their own tormentors.
- “the fire shall devour them” – Never tolerate slight thoughts of hell or you will soon have low thoughts of sin. The hell of sinners must be fearful beyond all conception or such language as the present would not be used.
 - There is a day of vengeance of our God; let those who despise the day of grace remember the day of wrath.
- 21:11 – “intended evil against You” – God takes notice of intentions. He who would but could not is as guilty as he who did. It is not that they lack ability; they just lack opportunity.
- God looks at the heart. (1 Sam. 16:7)
- 21:13 – “Be exalted” – At some point, Jesus will set up His kingdom on this earth.

Chapter 22:

Psalm 22 – “The Psalm of the Cross.” David gives us a picture of Christ on the cross 1,000 years before Jesus’ crucifixion and 800 years before crucifixion was invented.

- The cry from the cross (v. 1-21) and the victory over the cross (v. 22-31).
 - No psalm is quoted more frequently in the NT.
- 22:1 – “My God” – Our Lord’s faith beams forth and deserves our reverent imitation; He keeps His hold upon His God with both hands.
- “why have You forsaken Me?” – Quoted by Jesus on the cross. (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34)
 - This is the only question Jesus ever asked that He didn’t have an answer to.
 - Sin was the cause of our and Jesus’ separation from God. (Isa. 59:1-2)
 - Jesus was not only forsaken, but He was a receiver of God’s wrath as the propitiation. Jesus drank the full cup of God’s wrath and eternal punishment in those six hours on the cross.
 - “forsaken Me” – Hell itself has for its fiercest flame the separation of the soul from God.
 - “groaning” – For David, the groaning was internal, not external.
- 22:2 – “do not hear” – For our prayers to appear to be unheard is no new trial. Jesus felt it before us, and it is observable that He still held fast His believing hold on God, and cried still, “My God.”
- 22:3 – “holy” – God’s holiness could not stand before the sin hanging in Christ on the cross.
- God’s holiness and man’s sin requires a perfect and eternal sacrifice to reunite man to God.
 - Does it seem strange that the heart in its darkness and sorrow should find comfort in this attribute of God? No, for God’s holiness is but another aspect of His faithfulness, mercy, and unconditional love.
 - “Enthroned in the praises” – (KJV “inhabitest the praises.”)
- 22:4 – “trusted” – “Trust” is used 4 times in vv. 4, 5, and 8.
- “You delivered them” – The experience of other saints may be a great consolation to us when in deep waters, if faith can be sure that their deliverance will be ours.
 - God is “the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Heb. 13:8)

22:6 – “worm” – (Heb. “towla”) Also translated “scarlet” as in Isa. 1:18.

- “When the female of the scarlet worm species was ready to give birth to her young, she would attach her body to the trunk of a tree, fixing herself so firmly and permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae were hatched and able to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, the crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms, the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted. What a picture this gives us of Christ, dying on the tree, shedding his precious blood that he might “bring many sons unto glory” (Heb. 2:10). He died for us, that we might live through him.” (Henry Morris. “Biblical Basis for Modern Science,” Baker Book House, 1985, p. 73)
- “So trodden under foot, trampled upon, maltreated, buffeted, and spit upon, mocked and tormented, as to seem more like a worm than a man. Behold, what great contempt hath the Lord of Majesty endured, that His confusion may be our glory; His punishment our heavenly bliss! Without ceasing to impress this spectacle, O Christian, on thy soul” – Dionysius, quoted by Isaac Williams.
- Man by nature is but a worm, but our Lord puts Himself even beneath man. (Phil. 2:5-11)

22:7 – “ridicule Me” – (“laugh me to scorn” – KJV) As they did in Matt. 27:39 and Mark 15:29.

- How can we ever complain of ridicule after this? Men made faces at Him before Whom angels veil their faces and adore. The basest signs of disgrace which disdain could devise were maliciously cast at Him.

22:8 – “He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him” – Quoted in part in Matt. 27:43.

- Here the taunt is cruelly aimed at the sufferer’s faith in God, which is the most tender point in a good man’s soul.

22:10 – “From My mother’s womb” – This speaks of Jesus’ sinlessness from birth.

- When did Jesus know of His purpose on earth? He may have been aware of His person and purpose from birth, or even before birth.
- Jesus is the seed of the woman to crush the head of the serpent. (Gen. 3:15)

22:12 – “bulls of Bashan” – Possibly describing the demonic forces opposing Christ on the cross.

- Conceive of the Lord Jesus as a helpless, unarmed, naked man, cast into the midst of a herd of infuriated wild bulls.
- “Bashan” – Bashan was a fertile country (Num. 32:4), and the cattle there fed were fat and strong. (Deut. 32:14)

22:14 – “poured out like water” – “For we must needs die, and are as water spilt out on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.” (2 Sam. 14:14)

- “heart is like wax” – Some believe that Jesus’ heart ruptured at His death as the Roman soldier pierced His side and blood and water flowed out. (John 19:34)
- If the heart of Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, melted at it, what heart can endure, or hands be strong, when God deals with them in His wrath?

22:15 – “My tongue clings to My jaws” – Jesus, in His dehydration, called out for a drink so He could make His final statements from the cross. (John 19:28)

22:16 – “congregation of the wicked” – Calvary is at once the picture of the heart of a perfect God and of a wicked humanity; a perfect God who will love and die for humanity to redeem them to Himself and a wicked humanity that will kill perfection when it gets the chance to do as it wants.

- “pierced My hands” – In David’s day, stoning was the practiced means of capital punishment.
 - “Cursed is everyone hung on a tree.” (Deut. 21:23)
 - “They will look on Me whom they pierced.” (Zech. 12:10)

22:17 – “I can count all My bones” – Oh that we cared less for the body’s enjoyment and ease and more for our Father’s business. It were better to count the bones of an emaciated body than to bring leanness into our souls.

22:18 – “for My clothing they cast lots” – They cast lots for Jesus’ seamless garment. (Matt. 27:35; John 19:24)

- They seem to say, this garment is more valuable than its owner.

22:21 – “You have answered Me” – Everything in this psalm hinges on this verse.

- The transition is very marked; from a horrible tempest all is changed into calm.

22:22 – “declare Your name to My brethren” – Quoted in Heb. 2:12.

- “My brethren” – Jesus’ sacrifice makes this brotherly relationship with God possible.
- Mark how the dying Lover of our souls solaces Himself with the result of His death.

22:24 – “nor has He hidden His face from Him” – As the Father watched Jesus die on the cross.

22:25 – “My praise shall be of You” – It is literally “from You.” True praise is of celestial origin.

22:27 – “All the ends of the world” – The Millennial reign of Christ was purchased on the cross.

- “Shall remember” – This implies that man has forgotten God.
- “turn to the Lord” – The nature of true conversion: It is “to remember,” “to turn to the Lord,” and “to worship before Him.”

22:29 – “he who cannot keep himself alive” – There is no salvation apart from Christ.

22:30 – “posterity” – This is pointing to the Church.

22:31 – “declare His righteousness” – This is the purpose of the Church.

Chapter 23:

Psalm 23 – The position of this psalm is worthy of notice. It follows the twenty-second, which is peculiarly the “Psalm of the Cross.” There are no green pastures, no still waters on the other side of the twenty-second psalm. It is only after we have read, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?” that we come to “The Lord is my shepherd.” We must by experience know the value of the blood-shedding and see the sword awakened against the Shepherd before we shall be able truly to know the sweetness of the good Shepherd’s care.

- Some pious souls are troubled because they cannot at all times, or often, use, in its joyous import, the language of this psalm. Such should remember that David, though he lived long, never wrote but one twenty-third psalm.

- 23:1 – “The Lord is my shepherd” – (Heb. “Yahweh ra’ah”) Lit. “The Lord the shepherd.”
- “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” (John 10:11)
 - “is” – There is a noble note of confidence about this sentence. There is no “if” nor “but,” nor even “I hope so,” but he says “The Lord is my shepherd.”
 - The words are in the present tense. Whatever be the believer’s position, he is even now under the pastoral care of Jehovah.
 - “my” – If He be a shepherd to no one else, He is a shepherd to me; He cares for me, watches over me, and preserves me.
 - “my shepherd” – David learned of these things as a young man watching his father’s sheep.
 - That makes us sheep. Sheep are the dumbest, most vulnerable, and most dependant of all domestic animals.
 - In the tenth chapter of John’s Gospel, you will find six marks of Christ’s sheep: 1. They know their shepherd, 2. they know His voice, 3. they hear Him calling them each by name, 4. they love Him, 5. they trust Him, and 6. they follow Him.
 - “shall not want” – Lit. “lack no good thing.” (Ps. 84:11)
 - “I want nothing”: thus it may be equally well rendered” – J.R. Macduff.
 - How can we want? When united to Him, we have a right to use all His riches.
- 23:2 – “makes me” – Lit. “causes me.”
- “to lie down” – The Christian life has two elements in it, the contemplative and the active, and both of these are richly provided for. We are not always lying down to feed, but are journeying onward to perfection.
 - “green pastures” – Lit. “pastures of new growth.”
 - Sheep will remain at one grazing place until only dirt is left. Shepherds have to move them to keep them alive.
 - When sheep feed on moist or wet grass, they can go months without drinking water.
 - “leads” – Lit. “to lead gently.” The word means “leading by getting out in front to lead.”
 - You cannot drive sheep. The sheep hear the shepherd’s voice and follow Him.
 - “still waters” – Sheep will not drink in running water.
 - Sheep can drown if their fleece gets wet.
 - David would often say, “Why are you cast down, oh my soul?” “Cast down” is literally “rolled over” or “stacked on my back.”
- 23:3 – “He restores my soul” – When the soul grows sorrowful, He revives it. When it is sinful, he sanctifies it. When it is weak, he strengthens it. He does it.
- Who could “restore my soul” to life, but He only that is the Good Shepherd and gave His life for His sheep?
 - “restores” – Lit. “to bring back.”
 - “Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day...while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.” (2 Cor. 4:16)
 - “soul” – The mind.
 - God’s care is for more than our physical well-being.
 - “He leads me” – Lit. “He guides me.”
 - Sheep have a tendency to continue in ruts until forced to change.
 - “the paths” – Lit. “the well-worn footpaths, or ruts.”
 - If Jesus is leading you in a well-worn path, don’t leave it for something “new.” Stay with Jesus.

- 23:4 – “walk” – Not run, but walk. This denotes a process or some period of time.
- “through the valley” – Not just into the valley of the shadow, but through it.
 - The “paths of righteousness” (v. 3) become the “valley of the shadow of death” (v. 4).
 - “the shadow of death” – Translated in other places as “deepest darkness.”
 - “the shadow” – Shadows are caused by impeded light. The light of glory casts these shadows and death in its substance has been removed.
 - This bodily death is a door for entering into life, and therefore not so much dreadful.
 - “I will” – The person changes from the third person in vv. 1-3 to the first person.
 - The times of “deepest darkness” makes this very personal.
 - “fear no evil” – He does not say there shall not be any evil, but that he shall fear none.
 - The unknown, with its mystery and uncertainty often fills the heart with anxiety, if not with foreboding and gloom. Here, the psalmist takes the highest form of the unknown, the aspect which is most terrible to man, and says, that even in the midst of it he will trust.
 - It is said, when a bee has left its sting in anyone, it has no more power to hurt. Death has left its sting in the humanity of Christ and has no more power to harm His child. (1 Cor. 15:55)
 - “Your rod” – The same rod that fends off the wolves will also smack the sheep.
 - The rod and staff are signs of the shepherd’s authority and power.
 - “they comfort me” – The chastening of the Lord is evidence of His fathering relationship with us. (Heb. 12:5-11)

- 23:5 – “You prepare a table before me” – Oh, the peace which Jehovah gives to His people, even in the midst of the most trying circumstances.
- “in the presence of my enemies” – “...he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” (1 John 5:18)
 - “my enemies” – The good man has his enemies. He would not be like his Lord if he had not. If we were without enemies, we might fear that we were not the friends of God, for the friendship of the world is enmity to God.
 - “anoint my head with oil” – This anointing served medicinal purposes for the sheep.
 - A priest without oil misses the chief qualification for his office.
 - “My cup runs over” – The Vulgate translates this: “And my inebriating chalice, how excellent it is!”
 - “Give, and it will be give to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38)

- 23:6 – “follow me” – Lit. “pursue me.” This could also be translated “hunt me.”
- “dwell in the house of the Lord” – Seeking God’s presence.

Chapter 24:

Psalm 24 – Many believe this psalm corresponds to 2 Sam. 6, when the ark of the covenant was taken up from the house of Obed-Edom to remain in Jerusalem..

- This psalm is traditionally sung on Ascension Sunday.

- 24:1 – “The earth is the Lord’s” – This is quoted in 1 Cor. 10:25-26.
- “and all its fullness” – The earth is full of God; He made it full and He keeps it full.
 - “those who dwell therein” – They are God’s, not mine.
 - This psalm shows so clearly that God is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also.

- 24:2 – “founded it upon the seas” – Let it be noted, however, upon what insecure foundations all terrestrial things are founded. Founded on the seas.
- “established it” – The world is Jehovah’s because from generation to generation He preserves and upholds it, having settled its foundations. (Col. 1:17)
- 24:3 – “Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?” – The idea is nobody can really pull this off on their own, to bring themselves to the height of the King of the Universe.
- “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.” (John 3:13)
 - “who may stand in His holy place?” – Psalm 23:6 just spoke of dwelling “in the house of the Lord forever.”
- 24:4 – “clean hands” – External purity.
- It is vain to prate of inward experience unless the daily life is free from impurity, dishonesty, violence, and oppression.
 - “pure heart” – Internal purity.
 - A holy life is required to worship a holy God. “Pursue...holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.” (Heb. 12:14)
 - “Clean hands” would not suffice unless they were connected with “a pure heart.” True religion is heart-work. We may wash the outside of the cup and the platter as long as we please, but if the inward parts be filthy, we are filthy altogether in the sight of God, for our hearts are more truly ourselves than our hands are.
 - “not lifted up his soul to an idol” – This is an imputed righteousness that comes as a result of trusting in Jesus alone.
 - Does this world satisfy you? Then you have your reward and your portion in this life; make much of it, for you shall know no other joy.
- 24:6 – “Jacob” – The heel-catcher, conniver, and manipulator who was captured by God.
- “seek Your face” – Even seeking has a sanctifying influence; what a consecrating power must lie in finding and enjoying the Lord’s face and favor. To desire communion with God is a purifying thing.
 - These last verses reveal to us the great Representative Man, Who answered to the full character laid down, and therefore by His own right ascended the holy hill of Zion. Our Lord Jesus Christ could ascend into the hill of the Lord because His hands were clean and His heart was pure, and if we by faith in Him are conformed to His image, we shall enter too.
- 24:7 – “be lifted up, you everlasting doors” – Ezekiel says Messiah will use the East Gate.
- The old East Gate of Jerusalem is buried under the current East Gate which has now been desecrated with gravesites.
 - “the King of Glory shall come it” – He who was “a worm” at His birth, a Lamb in His passion, and a Lion in His resurrection, now ascends as an Eagle to heaven, and encourages us to follow Him there.
 - How much greater then must be the triumph of His entry into the heavenly Jerusalem! Would not all the city be moved in this case saying, “Who is this?” See thousands of angels attending Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand come forth to meet Him. The entrance of the ark into the city of David was but a foreshadow of this, and the responsive strains which were sung on that occasion would on this be much more applicable.

24:8 – “the Lord mighty in battle” – We know the might of Jesus by the battles which He has fought, the victories which He has won over sin, and death, and hell, and we clap our hands as we see Him leading captivity captive in the majesty of His strength.

Chapter 25:

Psalm 25 – This psalm was written at a time of great emotional distress in David’s life, possibly as a result of fleeing from Absalom. It is evidently a composition of David’s later days, for he mentions the sins of his youth.

- This is the second of the seven Penitential Psalms.

25:1 – “I lift up my soul” – This implies that he was previously downcast.

- What a mercy that the Lord will condescend to hear our cries in time of trouble, although we may have almost forgotten Him in our hours of fancied prosperity.

25:2-3 – “ashamed” – Three times in two verses.

25:3 – “let no one who waits on You be ashamed” – We are most often ashamed of those things we do when we haven’t waited on the Lord.

- Suffering enlarges the heart by creating the power to sympathize.
- “waits on You” – We wait on God like a waiter at a restaurant ready to serve God.
 - “Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters...so our eyes look to the Lord our God.” (Ps. 123:2)
- “deal treacherously without cause” – Men sin because they will sin, not because it is either profitable or reasonable to do so.

25:4-5 – “Your ways...Your paths...Your truth” – Waiting is not a passive, but an active learning.

25:4 – “Your ways” – “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.” (Ps. 103:7)

- “Teach me” – It is not just surviving this difficult time, but learning something through it and because of it.

25:5 – “Your truth” – “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)

- “You are the God of my salvation” – It is a happy thing when we can address the Lord with the confidence which David here manifests. It gives us great power in prayer and comfort in trial.
- “On You I wait” – To wait on God is, 1. to live a life of desire towards God; to wait on Him as the beggar waits on his benefactor, and 2. to live a life in God, as the lover waits on his beloved.

25:6-7 – “Remember” – Three times in two verses.

25:6 – “they are from of old” – A more correct translation would be “from eternity.” David was a sound believer in the doctrine of God’s eternal love.

- 25:7 – “Do not remember” – David asks God to choose to not remember, because God cannot forget.
- “sins of my youth” – This is probably not referring to David’s sins with Uriah and Bathsheba; David was about 50 years old at that time. And yet, he is still very aware of the secret sins of his youth.
 - The world winks at the sins of young men, and yet they are none so little after all.
 - Though David for the main was a man after God’s own heart, yet he, especially in his youth had his faults and infirmities, yea, his sins and transgressions.
 - “Your mercy” – This is the only way the sinful could be made righteous forever.
- 25:8 – “teaches sinners” – David had asked God to show him His ways, path, and truth, and apparently God has answered.
- God Himself will condescend to be the teacher of sinners.
- 25:10 – “mercy and truth” – This is God’s stance toward those walking His way.
- Mercy and truth come together in Jesus.
- 25:11 – “For Your name’s sake” – Not for our sakes or our merit’s sake, but to glorify Your mercy and to show forth the glory of Your divine attributes.
- Faith looks not for the merit in the creature, but has regard to the goodness of the Creator.
 - Since God forgives sins for His name’s sake, He will be ready to forgive many sins as well as few, great, and small.
 - “Pardon my iniquity” – Many complain more of the sorrows to which they are born than of the sins with which they were born. The one would be freed from punishment, the effect of sin; the other from sin, the cause of the punishment.
 - “my iniquity, for it is great” – He pleads the greatness of his sin, and not the smallness of it. He enforces his prayer with this consideration, that his sins are very heinous.
 - God is moved to mercy towards us by nothing in us but the miserableness of our case.
- 25:13 – “dwell in prosperity” – He who fears God has nothing else to fear. His souls “shall dwell at ease.” (KJV)
- 25:14 – “secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him” – God will reveal Himself and His will to us when we are ready to obey whatever he shows us.
- Do what you know, and God will teach you what to do. Do what you know to be your present duty, and God will acquaint you with your future duty as it comes to be present.
 - “the secret of the Lord” – Some read it “the friendship”: it signifies familiar intercourse, confidential intimacy, and select fellowship. Walking with God is the best way to know the mind of God; friends who walk together impart their secrets to one another.
 - There is a vital sense in which “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:14), and in which all the realities of Christian experience are utterly hid from his perceptions.
 - The greatest of mysteries is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27)
 - “fear Him” – Present fear begets eternal security: fear God, which is above all, and no need to fear man at all.
- 25:15 – “pluck my feet out of the net” – Observe the conflicting condition in which a gracious soul may be placed, his eyes are in heaven and yet his feet are sometimes in a net.

- 25:16 – “Turn Yourself to me” – David knows God can save him from his affliction.
- The cry for mercy recognizes serious need that David cannot solve or meet himself.
- 25:17 – “The troubles of my heart have enlarged” – Let no good man be surprised that his affliction is great and to him of an unaccountable character. It has always been so with God’s people. The road to heaven is soaked with the tears and blood of the saints.
- 25:18 – “forgive all my sins” – This is the cry of a soul that is more sick of sin than of pain and would sooner be forgiven than healed.
- 25:20 – “Keep my soul” – This is another version of the prayer, “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (Matt. 6:13)
- “Let me not be ashamed” – This refers back to vv. 2-3.
 - This is the one fear which haunted the psalmist’s mind. And as I put my trust in God, His way, and His word, this is my prayer too. May God not bring shame to any who are truly following His word and His will.
- 25:21 – “integrity and uprightness” – These are marks of those who wait on God.
- “I wait for you” – Referring back to v. 3.
- 25:22 – “Israel” – This is the name of promise.

Chapter 26:

- 26:1 – “Vindicate” – means “give me justice, defend my reputation.”
- “integrity” – means “whole, complete, sincere, or undivided.”
 - Psalm 26 picks up on the theme of integrity from Psalm 25:21.
 - “trusted in the Lord” – This is the basis for David’s vindication.
 - David had not used any traitorous or unrighteous means to gain the crown or to keep it.
 - Why should I steal when God has promised to supply my need? Confidence in God is a most effectual security against sin.
- 26:2 – “Examine...prove...try” – The psalmist uses three words that are designed to include all the modes in which the reality of anything is tested, and they imply together that he wished the most thorough investigation to be made. He did not shrink from any test.
- In prosperity, every man will seem godly, but afflictions do draw out of the heart whatsoever is there, whether it be good or bad.
- 26:3 – “I have walked in Your truth” – Personal integrity brings one stability during times of great hardship.
- A guilty conscience has a long shelf life; for example: Joseph’s brothers after Jacob had died and Herod Antipas after killing John the Baptist.
 - Some talk of truth, but it is better to walk in it.
- 26:4 – “not sat with idolatrous mortals” – Your friendship with the ungodly will hinder your integrity. (1 Cor. 15:33)

- 26:5 – “hated” – This stands in contrast to what he loved in v. 8.
- Much of our life can be measured by that which we love and hate.
 - While we are merry and jovial with the wicked, we make them believe their condition is not deplorable.
 - “assembly of evildoers” – There will be a congregation of evildoers right up to the end.

- 26:8 – “loved the habitation of Your house” – In contrast to hating the assembly of evildoers. (v. 5)
- One cannot love the habitation of God’s house and the prestige of sinners at the same time. (John 5:44)
 - Many want to live as sinners and die as saints.
 - David’s integrity is a result of knowing what he loves and hates.

Chapter 27:

Psalm 27 – According to the title of this psalm as recorded in the Septuagint, David wrote it “before he was anointed.”

- 1 Sam. 23:1-13 and 2 Sam. 21:15-17 are two proposed contexts for this psalm.
- This psalm may with profit be read in a threefold way, as the language of David, of the Church, and of the Lord Jesus.

- 27:1 – “The Lord is” – This is not “the Lord gives.” The gift is God Himself.
- Some just want the light or salvation, but care very little about God Himself. This is the reason why many miss Jesus. (John 1:4-5)
 - “my light” – To know that “God is light” is one thing, but to be able to say “the Lord is my light” is quite another thing. When He is thus “our light,” then He is “our salvation” also.
 - “Whom shall I fear?” – This refers to experience, not just to knowledge.
 - Who else can we fear if we fear God? You don’t worry about a hangnail when the hand is cut off.

27:2 – “the wicked came against me” – It is a hopeful sign for us when the wicked hate us.

- 27:3 – “In this I will be confident” – He would trust in God alone.
- Where there is no confidence in God, there will be no continuance with God.

- 27:4 – “One thing” – Purity is to be all of one substance.
- “One thing I have desired” – God judges us very much by the desire of our hearts.
 - What do you really want? You will find what you want. The heart will make a convert of the mind.
 - “That will I seek” – Holy desires must lead to resolute action.
 - “dwell in the house of the Lord” – He is referring to his communion and fellowship with God. God’s presence.
 - David knows that God will not betray him as others have.
 - “temple” – (Heb. “hical”) Lit. “magnificent structure.”

- 27:5 – “in the time of trouble He shall hide me” – He shall give me the best of shelter in the worst of danger.
- “hide me in His pavilion” – He is not hiding in a bomb shelter or in a cabin in the woods.

27:6 – “sing praises to the Lord” – This comes even in the midst of great distress and loneliness.

- 27:8 – “Seek My face” – God is willing to be known. He desires to reveal Himself.
- God doesn’t want a business relationship; He wants a father-child relationship.
 - “Your face, Lord, I will seek” – God’s face; not merely God’s hand.
 - David is quick to respond to God’s invitation.
- 27:9 – “Do not leave me nor forsake me” – Matt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5
- 27:10 – “my father and my mother forsake me” – Even when the nearest of human relationships fail, God will still be there.
- This is a verse for the next generation which is largely being raised without a mother or father.
- 27:11 – “lead me in a smooth path” – God not leaving us (v. 9) has a lot to do with us walking His way.
- “because of my enemies” – It is wonderful to observe how honest simplicity baffles and outwits the craftiness of wickedness. Truth is wisdom.
- 27:12 – “false witnesses” – Slander and lies.
- 27:13 – “believed” – Faith and trust have great consequences in our lives.
- “the goodness of the Lord” – “And he said, ‘Please, show me Your glory.’ Then He said, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before you.’” (Exod. 33:18-19)
 - “...the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. 4:6)
 - “In the land of the living” – God’s presence presently...as well as in heaven.
- 27:14 – “strengthen your heart” – God can do that without the props of life.

Chapter 28:

Ps. 28 – Psalm of answered prayer.

- 28:1 – “To You I will cry” – Why pay a psychologist to listen to you when you could go to Almighty God?
- In the time of your trouble, do not roam; do not let your thoughts wander as though they were looking for someone on whom to fix. But “To You I will cry.”
 - “Do not be silent to me” – David was listening.
 - “like those who go down to the pit” – David’s greatest fear was to be out of communion with God.
- 28:3 – “But evil is on their hearts” – Hypocrites are a danger to themselves and others.
- It were better to be shut up in a pit with serpents than to be compelled to live with liars.
- 28:4 – “Give them according to their deeds” – David prays honest prayers.
- The holy prophet is not inflamed here by his own private sorrow to devote his enemies to destruction; but laying aside the desire of the flesh, he gives judgment concerning the matter itself.
- 28:5 – “He shall destroy them” – Future tense. These are prophecies of divine judgments.
- 28:6 – “Blessed be the Lord” – Here the psalm turns from prayer to praise.
- 28:8 – “The Lord is their strength” – David wants us to know God as he knows God.

28:9 – “Save Your people” – David prays for all believers.

Chapter 29:

Ps. 29 – Praising the power of God.

- Here we have God’s works and God’s Word joined together.

29:1 – “Give unto the Lord” – Three times in the first two verses.

- Neither men nor angels can confer anything upon Jehovah, but they should recognize His glory and might.
- “Lord” – Yahweh. This name of God is repeated here no fewer than 18 times in this short psalm, twice in every verse but three, and once in two of those three.
- “mighty ones” – (Heb. “bene elohim”) This is speaking of the angels.
 - It seems the fallen angels played some role in things leading to Noah’s flood. (Gen. 6:2,4)

29:2 – “Give unto the Lord” – This is a call to worship the Lord.

- “the beauty of holiness” – Holiness is beautiful because it looks like Jesus.
- “holiness” – We are to be holy, because He is holy. (Lev. 11:44)
 - “Pursue peace will all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.” (Heb. 12:14)

29:3 – “the voice of the Lord” – Mentioned 7 times in 11 verses.

- The same power of God goeth forth by His word, “living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12), penetrating, melting, enlightening, and inflaming the hearts of men.
- “many waters” – It had never rained before the flood. (Gen. 2:5-6)

29:4 – “The voice of the Lord is powerful” – As the voice of God in nature is so powerful, so is it in grace; the reader will do well to draw the parallel.

- It is a diabolical science, however, which fixes our contemplations on the works of nature and turns then away from God.

29:5 – “Lebanon” – Located north of Israel.

29:7 – “divides the flames of fire” – Lit. “digs the flames of fire.” This may speak of lava pouring out of the ground at the flood.

29:8 – “shakes the Wilderness” – At the giving of the Law from Mt. Sinai, all 2-3 million people heard God’s voice at the same time and it frightened the people. (Exod. 20)

- “Kadesh” – Located south of Israel.
 - The storm is moving. (v. 5)

29:10 – “the Flood” – (Heb. “mabbuwl”) Speaking of Noah’s flood. (Gen. 6-9)

29:11 – “the Lord will bless” – Considering God’s voice, this is a huge blessing. His majestic voice comes as a “still, small voice” to His children. (1 Kings 19:12)

- “The Lord will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zeph. 3:17)
- “The Lord will roar from Zion.” (Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2)

Chapter 30:

Ps. 30 – “at the dedication of the house of David” – David wrote this psalm to be sung at the dedication of the Temple he wasn’t allowed to build. Therefore, this is a song of faith.

- The Temple was a place of God’s grace because at the Temple the sacrifice of a substitutionary atonement was offered.
- “house of David” – The Temple is often called Solomon’s Temple.

30:1 – “I will extol You...for You have lifted me up” – Here is an antithesis. Lift high the Name of our God, for He has lifted us above the stars.

- “lifted” – The verb is used, in its original meaning, to denote the reciprocating motion of the buckets of a well, one descending as the other rises, and vice versa.
- “not let my foes rejoice over me” – David had a history of God delivering him from enemies.

30:3 – “You have” – It is not, “I hope so,” but it is “You have.”

30:4 – “Sing praise” – It is better to do it than merely to read it.

- We can praise God, even in the midst of a trial.
- “you saints of His” – We are His saints.

30:5 – “His anger” – What a mercy it is that He is not angry with you as well as with them.

30:6 – “prosperity” – means “careless ease, a carefree self-assurance because things are going so well.”

- “I said” – This is an easy thing to say and a much tougher thing to live out.

30:7 – “You hid Your face” – There were times God punished David.

- Only the lack of God’s face moved David.
- This proves, first, that David was a genuine saint, for no hiding of God’s face on earth would trouble a sinner.
- It is the looking or not looking of God upon His creatures that forms the happiness or the misery of that creature.
- “troubled” – (Heb. “bahal”) The word signifies “to be greatly troubled, to be sorely troubled” as in 1 Sam. 28:21: “And the woman came to Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled.”

30:10 – “Lord, be my helper” – David is trusting in God alone.

- When God helps, difficulties vanish.

30:12 – “praise to You and not be silent” – It would be a shameful crime if, after receiving God’s mercies, we should forget to praise Him.

- The prophet in this psalm begins with the anger of God, but ends with His favor, as of old, when they entered into the tabernacle they did at first see unpleasant things, but when they passed a little farther there was the holy place, the candlestick of gold, the showbread, and the altar of gold on which they offered incense.

Chapter 31:

Ps. 31 – The battle of faith in the midst of adversity. The context may be when Absalom usurped the throne.

- David stayed “after” God in the highs and lows of his life. He took his rewards and punishments directly from God’s hand.

31:1-8 – The trust vs. the trial.

31:1 – “Let me never be ashamed” – Everything else we trust in makes us look dumb at times.

31:2 – “Bow down Your ear to me” – We generally put our ear near to the lips of the sick and dying that we may hear what they say.

- “rock of refuge” – Rocks were used as defensive positions in battle.
- Proverbs speaks of the wisdom of the defenseless coney which would hide in the rocks.

31:3 – “You are my rock and my fortress” – David learned the reality of this through great trials. He possessed the truths of these things for himself.

- When David was anointed as king, God would begin preparing David as a king. But God didn’t want another king like Saul. So to rid the Saul out of David, God put a Saul in David’s life.

31:5 – “Into Your hand I commit my spirit” – Jesus prayed that from the cross. (Luke 23:46)

- David had deep fellowship into the sufferings of Christ.
- “commit” – Lit. “deposit.”
- “You have redeemed me” – Redemption is a solid basis for confidence.

31:6 – “I trust in the Lord” – This might be very unfashionable, but the psalmist dared to be singular.

31:7 – “You have known my soul in adversities” – God owns His saints when others are ashamed to acknowledge them. He never refuses to know His friends.

31:9-18 – The triumph of trust over trial.

31:9 – “my soul and my body” – Soul and body are so intimately united that one cannot decline without the other feeling it.

31:10 – “my life is spent with grief” – It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting.

- “my bones waste away” – Possibly speaking of David’s sin with Bathsheba. (32:3)
- I find that when saints are under trial and well humbled, little sins raise great cries in the conscience.

31:11 – “I am a reproach among all my enemies” – The best of men may have the bitterest foes and be subjected to the most cruel taunts.

- “especially among my neighbors” – We feel most the slights of those who should have shown us sympathy.
- “Those who see me outside flee from me” – As they did from Christ in Gethsemane.

- 31:12 – “I am forgotten like a dead man” – Much like those who have forgotten Jesus despite the fact that Jesus died for them.
- “I am like a broken vessel” – Let us see herein the portrait of the King of kings in His humiliation, when He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant.
- 31:13 – “I hear the slander of many” – I take it for a notable proof of man’s fall, and of the truth of the Scripture, and of the supernatural original of true sanctification, to find such universal enmity between the holy and the serpentine seed.
- 31:14 – “I trust in You, O Lord” – David makes a decision to trust God despite the adversaries and pain coming against him.
- “You are my God” – To be able to say, “God is mine!”
- 31:15 – “My times are in Your hands” – The idea is “the seasons of my life.”
- God regulates our life-clock.
 - “Deliver me” – It is lawful to desire escape from persecution if it is the Lord’s will.
- 31:16 – “Make Your face shine” – David desires God’s pleasure above the respect of men.
- 31:19-24 – Glorifying in trust.
- 31:19 – “great is Your goodness” – God’s goodness proves greater than all the trials of David’s life.
- 31:22 – “I said in haste” – We say a lot of stupid things in haste.
- “I am cut off” – David complained in the midst of his difficulty too.
- 31:24 – “Be of good courage” – Christian courage may thus be described; it is the undaunted audacity of a sanctified heart in adventuring upon difficulties and undergoing hardships for a good cause upon the call of God.

Chapter 32:

Psalm 32 – The context of this psalm is David’s sin with Bathsheba and Uriah.

- In the order of history, this psalm seems to follow the Fifty-First.
- “contemplation” – (Heb. “maschil”) Can also be translated “instruction.”
 - This is the 1st of the 13 maschil psalms.
 - This is the second of the seven penitential psalms. (Psalm 6)
 - This is the second psalm that begins with the word “blessed.” (Psalm 1)

32:1-1 – Quoted by Paul in Romans 4:7-8.

- Martin Luther called Psalm 32 a “Pauline Psalm.” He said, “The 32nd, the 51st, the 130th, and the 143rd...teach that the forgiveness of our sins comes without the law and without works to the man who believes.”

- 32:1 – “Blessed” – Like the Sermon on the Mount, this psalm begins with beatitudes. This is the second psalm of benediction. The first psalm describes the result of holy blessedness, the thirty-second details the cause of it.
- “Blessed is he” – The focus here is on the person from whom the sins are taken.
 - “transgression” – (Heb. “pasha”) Lit. “to step over the line.” Deliberate disobedience.
 - “forgiven” – Lit. “taken off, taken away.” As a burden is lifted or a barrier removed.
 - “sin” – (Heb. “chataah”) Lit. “to miss the mark.” Both knowingly and not.
 - “covered” – Lit. “to lay something over.” As the atonement is made.
 - What a cover must that be which hides away forever from the sight of the all-seeing God all the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.
 - Ps. 51:16-17 – “For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it...The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart – These, O God, You will not despise.” There were no sacrifices for adultery and murder. They were capital crimes in Israel.
- 32:2 – “iniquity” – (Heb. “avon”) Lit. “to bend, twist.” Speaks of the inward fallen and twisted nature.
- “impute” – Lit. “to add to one’s account, to forgive debt.”
 - “deceit” – (Heb. “remiyah”) Lit. “to cover up.” Trying to get away with the sin.
 - Deceit (hypocrisy) may be the most damning as it keeps us from repentance.
 - David put on the façade of the kinsman-redeemer by taking Bathsheba as his wife shortly after the death of Uriah. But it was all in an effort to cover up his sin.
 - David lived in deceit for nearly a year.
- 32:3 – “groaning” – Lit. “roaring.” He was outwardly silent and inwardly roaring.
- These are the effects of unconfessed sin in David’s life.
 - God does not ask us to carry the weight of unconfessed sin, because someone else has carried it for us.
- 32:4 – “Your hand was heavy upon me” – God will not allow His children to be successful in sin.
- This is the hand that laid out the universe.
- 32:5 – “acknowledged my sin” – He owns his sin. No excuses.
- Once you sin, you are no longer the victim.
 - 1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” To confess is not merely saying your sin out loud, but agreeing with God’s opinion on it.
 - “And You forgave” – The ready forgiveness of God comes as David prepares to confess.
 - God keeps careful track of all our sins so as to be sure not to miss any when Jesus died on the cross.
- 32:6 – “For this cause” – Because of David’s example, we can be confident of God’s grace when we humble ourselves to acknowledge our sin.
- “everyone who is godly” – David is writing this from the perspective of an adulterer and murderer.

32:7 – “my hiding place” – It was a hiding place before, but it was “his” hiding place only when he ran into it and was safe.

- “You shall preserve me” – Observe the three tenses; we have noticed the sorrowful past, the last sentence was a joyful present, and this is a cheerful future.
- “preserve me” – David’s confidence in God returns when the sin is confessed.
 - The same man who in the fourth verse was oppressed by the presence of God here finds a shelter in Him.

32:8 – “I will instruct you” – God responds.

- “I will instruct you...teach you...guide you” – The threefold repetition teaches us three properties of a good teacher. First, to make the people understand the way of salvation; second, to go before them; third, to watch over them and their ways.
- “guide you with My eye” – Lit. “I will counsel you; Mine eyes shall be upon you.”
 - This is God’s heart and desire for us. We don’t have to learn the hard way. (2 Cor. 3:18 – “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”)

32:9 – “harnessed with bit and bridle” – If you need hardships to keep you walking with the Lord, then God will be gracious enough to bring the hardship.

- Those cutting bits of affliction show how hard-mouthed we are; those bridles of infirmity manifest our headstrong and willful manners. We should not be treated like mules if there was not so much of the ass about us.
- It is almost impossible to make advances when you are dealing with crisis.

32:10 – “mercy shall surround him” – It is a blessed thing in the midst of the joys and sorrows of the world to trust in the Lord.

32:11 – “glad in the Lord” – Gladness through confession.

- “upright in heart” – The correction comes through confession.

Chapter 33:

Psalm 33 – The theme is “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made.” (v. 6)

33:1 – “Rejoice in the Lord” – To rejoice in temporal comforts is dangerous, to rejoice in self is foolish, to rejoice in sin is fatal, but to rejoice in God is heavenly.

- “Rejoice” – The Hebrew originally means “to dance for joy.”

33:3 – “Sing to Him” – Ps. 147:1-2; Isa. 26:19; Isa. 42:10-11; Isa. 65:14.

- “new song” – This is the first of 6 new songs in the psalms.
- “Play skillfully” – God is worthy of our best effort.
 - It is wretched to hear God praised in a slovenly or hypocritical manner.

33:4 – “For the word of the Lord” – This is the reason for praise.

- “the word of the Lord is right” – “Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)

33:6 – “the heavens were made” – In Genesis 1, we see God speak the world into existence.

- This is the power of God’s word.
- “breath” – In the Hebrew, the word “breath” is the same as is elsewhere rendered “Spirit.”

- 33:10 – “the counsel of nations” – God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men that exist in the world He created.
 - The cause of God is never in danger.
- 33:11 – “counsel of the Lord stands forever” – This stands in contrast to the latest fads to run through the Church.
- 33:12 – “nation...people He has chosen” – This refers to Israel. (Deut. 9:29)
 - “people He has chosen” – God chooses humans out of all this.
- 33:13 – “sees all the sons” – God sees all 6.5 billion people on earth at this time as individuals.
- 33:15 – “He considers all their works” – God isn’t fooled; He understands all their works.
- 33:18 – “the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him” – He is watching to protect and watch over them, even in the midst of destruction and famine. (v. 19)
 - “the eye of the Lord” – Of greater power than the horse or the army.
- 33:19 – “deliver their soul from death” – The Lord’s hand goes with His eye. His sovereignty preserves those whom He graciously observes.
- 33:20 – “Our soul” – Not our souls, but our soul, as if they had only one. And thus in the beginning of the gospel it was said, “The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul.”
 - “waits for the Lord” – If you want God to take care of you, it seems you’ll have to wait on Him at times. His work comes in His time.

Chapter 34:

- Psalm 34 – “when he pretended madness before Abimelech” – From 1 Sam. 21:10-15 after David’s victory over Goliath and Saul turning on him. God takes Samuel, Jonathan, his wife, and his homeland away from him. So David flees to the Philistines and the city of Gath, but has to feign madness to escape from the Philistines.
 - Although the gratitude of the psalmist prompted him thankfully to record the goodness of the Lord in vouchsafing an undeserved deliverance, yet he weaves none of the incidents of the escape into the narrative but dwells only on the grand fact of his being heard in the hour of peril.
 - “Abimelech” – This may have been the dynastic name or title of the Philistine kings of this region like Pharaoh in Egypt. (Gen. 20; 21:22-34; 26) He is called Achish in 1 Sam. 21:10.
- 34:1 – “I will” – This is a choice David is making despite difficult circumstances.
 - “bless the Lord at all times” – So saith a believing soul: “Let God do with me what He will, I will be thankful.”
- 34:4 – “delivered me” – David is speaking from experience.
 - “fears” – This is the reason why David feigned insanity at Gath.
 - “The fear of man proves a snare.” (Prov.)
- 34:5 – “They looked unto Him” – The more we can think upon our Lord and the less upon ourselves, the better.

34:6-8 – “saved...delivers...Blessed” – God saves, keeps, and satisfies.

34:6 – “This poor man cried” – His prayer was a cry.

34:8 – “taste and see” – This is speaking of a spiritual experience.

- “the Lord is good” – The Lord will never leave a bitter aftertaste. He is only good.
- “trusts in Him” – Trusting comes after tasting.

34:9 – “no want to those who fear Him” – David would be speaking this to the discontents who have gathered to him at Adullam.

- “Seek first...” (Matt. 6:33)

34:11 – “Come, you children” – David, in this latter part of the psalm, undertakes to teach children; though a man of war and anointed to be king, he did not think it below him; though now he had his head full of cares and his hands of business, yet he could find heart and time to give good counsel to young people from his own experience.

- “listen to me” – Listening means hearing and doing.
- “the fear of the Lord” – David was a famous musician, a statesman, a soldier, but he does not say to his children, “I will teach you to play upon the harp, or to handle the sword or spear, or draw the bow,” or “I will teach you the maxims of state policy,” but “I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”

34:12-16 – This passage is quoted in 1 Pet. 3:10-12.

34:13 – “Keep your tongue from evil” – This is especially hard for political malcontents.

34:14 – “Depart from evil” – David refused to kill Saul when given the chance.

- “do good” – There are some in the world whose religion runs all upon negatives; they are not drunkards, they are not swearers, and for this they do bless themselves like the Pharisee of Luke 18:11. But we are bid, not only to cease from evil, but to do good.
- “peace” – (Heb. “shalom”) Lit. “wholeness, health.”
 - Character drives decisions.
- “pursue it” – Hunt after it; chase it with eager desire.

34:15 – “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous” – As any good father watches over his kids, because he loves to see them and know them.

34:16 – “the Lord is against those who do evil” – David is teaching those warriors to leave the ultimate battle in God’s hand.

34:18 – “The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart” – God draws near to those with a broken heart.

- Consider the advantages of a broken heart: Ps. 51:17; Isa. 57:15; Ps. 34:18; Ezek. 34:16; Rev. 22:2.
- “contrite” – Lit. “beaten out.” (Jer. 23:29)

34:19-22 – David breaks into this prophecy concerning the Messiah. (John 19:36)

34:19 – “Many...all” – The bad news and the good news.
- “the afflictions of the righteous” – The righteous hurt too.

34:20 – “Not one of them is broken” – This is quoted of Jesus in John 19:36.
- Christ’s bones were in themselves breakable, but could not actually be broken by all the violence in the world because God has fore-decreed.

Chapter 35:

Psalm 35 – A psalm of deliverance from and vengeance upon David’s enemies.

- The whole psalm is the appeal to heaven of a bold heart and a clear conscience irritated beyond measure by oppression and malice.

35:1 – “Plead my cause, O Lord” – David is taking his place behind God in the warfare.
- “fight against those who fight against me” – In the NT, we are asked to pray for those who spitefully use us. (Matt. 5:44)

35:3 – “Say to my soul, ‘I am your salvation’” – Observe that salvation may be made sure to a man.
- “my soul” – Luther says there is great divinity in pronouns. Let this teach us to make much of this “my.” The all-sufficient merits of Christ do you no good unless He is your Savior,

35:4 – “Let those be put to shame” – There is nothing malicious here; the slandered man simply craves for justice, and the petition is natural and justifiable. Guided by God’s good Spirit, the psalmist foretells the everlasting confusion of all the haters of the righteous.
- David was about as devoid of vindictiveness as any public character who can well be named. (Ps. 7:3-5) His conduct in relation to Saul and enduring the bitter reproaches of Shimei are two examples of David’s character.
- We find these prayers for vengeance in primarily 4 psalms: Psalm 7, 35, 69, and 109.

35:7 – “without cause” – Net-making and pit-digging require time and labor.

35:8 – “let his net that he has hidden catch himself” – The wicked shall be undone by their own doings.

35:9 – “joyful” – David is safe and content while God is fighting on his behalf.
- “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matt. 11:30)
- The great challenge of spiritual warfare is being rightly related to God.

35:11 – “Fierce witnesses” – This is the old device of the ungodly, and we must not wonder if it be used against us as against our Master.

35:13 – “when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth” – David cared for them, but they are repaying his good with evil. (Prov. 17:13)
- David killed Goliath, slew his ten thousands of the Philistines, and thereby saving his king and country, Saul and his courtiers envied him and sought to slay him.

35:15 – “Attackers gathered against me” – This is a marvelous prophecy of the cross. It is still closer to the history if we take the Vulgate: “The scourges were gathered together upon me.”

35:16 – “They gnashed at me with their teeth” – Let us not forget to see the Despised and Rejected of men here painted to the life. Calvary and the ribald crew around the cross seek brought before our eyes.

35:17 – “How long will You look on?” – God is watching and sees it all.

35:23 – “my God and my Lord” – This was the cry of Thomas when he saw the wounds of Jesus. (John 20:28)

35:24 – “Vindicate” – The Hebrew implies “make it right.”

35:25 – “swallowed him up” – They are claiming victory over David.

35:27 – “pleasure on the prosperity of His servant” – God wants to see us prosper.

- “prosperity” – (Heb. “shalom”) Lit. “peace, wholeness.”

35:28 – “Your praise” – David is sure to repay God with the praise He deserves.

- “Your praise all the day long” – Whatever you do, do well, and you have praised God.

Chapter 36:

Psalm 36 – David’s observations of the wicked.

- This psalm may come in response to psalm 35, when the wicked were pursuing David.

36:1 – “There is no fear of God before his eyes” – Quoted in Rom. 3:18.

- “no fear of God” – This is the source of all wickedness. When a man has no fear of God, he is prepared for any crime.

- “The fear of the Lord is clean.” (Ps. 19:9)

- ““Your own wickedness will correct you, and your backslidings will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing that you have forsaken the Lord your God, and the fear of Me is not in you,” says the Lord GOD of hosts.” (Jer. 2:19)

36:2 – “flatters himself” – Lit. “to smooth over one’s own conduct to one’s conscience.”

- He had not God before his eyes in holy awe, therefore he puts himself there in unholy admiration. He who makes little of God makes much of himself. (Rev. 3:17)

36:3 – “The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit” – “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matt. 12:34)

36:4 – “devises wickedness on his bed” – In contrast to the godly, who meditate within their heart on their bed. (Ps. 4:4)

- “abhor” – Lit. “melt away or drain.” He soaks in evil like a sponge.

36:6 – “You preserve man” – Right from the middle of this wicked generation.

36:7 – “the shadow of Your wings” – Oh, that more of Adam’s race knew the excellency of the heavenly shelter! It made Jesus weep to see how they refused it.

36:8 – “satisfied with the fullness of Your house” – We get to receive from God’s goodness.
- “pleasures” – This word comes from the same Hebrew word as “Eden” in Gen. 2-3 and it means “delights.”
- In this communion of God, what can we want? Why, God shall be all and in all to us.

36:9 – “In Your light we see light” – In spiritual things, the knowledge of God sheds a light on all other subjects.
- “But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.” (Eph. 5:13)
- “But if we walk in the light as His is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7)
- “Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.” (1 Cor. 13:12)
- God is “dwelling in unapproachable light.” (1 Tim. 6:16)

Chapter 37:

Ps. 37 – The theme of this psalm is “inherit the land.” (v. 3, 9, 11, 22, 29, 34) That is, to live on to enjoy the blessings of the Lord in the promised land.
- This psalm may well be styled, “The good man’s cordial in bad times; a sovereign plaster for the plague of discontent; or, a choice antidote against the poison of impatience.”
- This psalm was written by David in his later years. (v. 25)

37:1 – “fret” – Lit. “to worry, to fume, to become warm, to become vexed.” (v. 7, 8)
- “Be anxious for nothing.” (Phil. 4:6)
- “Let not your heart be troubled.” (John 14:1)
• In the Old English of the KJV, “worry” meant “to hang or dangle” as with a rope and “fret” meant “to corrode.”

37:2 – “cut down like the grass” – What good does all their prosperity do them? It does but hasten their ruin, not their reward.

37:3 – “Trust in the Lord” – There are things God has given us responsibility over, but when we decide to worry over what God alone has control over, then we are sinning with a lack of faith.
- “Trust” – Lit. “to lean heavily upon.”

37:4 – “Delight yourself also in the Lord” – Only when we are completely satisfied in the Lord will we be able to properly enjoy what we have been given.
- There is no room for fretting if we remember that God is ours.
- “Delight” – Lit. “to be filled with luxury.”

37:5 – “Commit your way” – The Vulgate translates this “Reveal your way” and St. Ambrose understood it of revealing our sins to God.
- “Commit” – means “to roll off a burden.” (1 Pet. 5:7)
- He does well to leave the whole matter with God; and so to all of us it is truest wisdom, having obediently trusted in God, to leave results in His hands and expect a blessed issue.
- Do your best and commit the rest.
- “bring it to pass” – (Heb. “asah”) Lit. “assemble.”

- 37:6 – “bring forth your righteousness” – If we take care of our character, He will take care of our reputation.
- The more we fret in this case, the worse for us. Our strength is to sit still; the Lord will clear the slandered.
- 37:7 – “Rest in the Lord” – This is an active process of seeking His face and His will. This comes as the result of not worrying, trusting God, enjoying Him luxuriously, and committing our ways to Him.
- “Rest” – means “be silent, be still.”
 - The Hebrew word rendered “silent” is “dom,” from which the English word “dumb” appears to be derived. The silence here enjoined is opposed to murmuring or complaining.
 - This may be the hardest precept given to man.
- 37:11 – “the meek shall inherit the earth” – Spoken by Jesus in Matt. 5:5.
- “inherit the earth” – This earth, which they seem most deprived of, they only shall have and enjoy.
 - “peace” – This is when the world will beat their swords into plowshares. (Isa. 2:4)
- 37:13 – “his day is coming” – God is patient to save some.
- 37:14 – “slay” – means “to butcher an animal.”
- 37:15 – “their own hurt” – God will get them with their own weapons.
- 37:18 – “The Lord knows the days of the upright” – In the Hebrew, the idea is “deposits their days, lays them up in safety for them.”
- 37:20 – “into smoke” – They will be burnt up with fire.
- 37:23 – “He delights in his way” – God delights in us when we have delighted in Him.
- This is the essence of relationship: two pleased to be with one another.
- 37:24 – “fall” – The idea is “stumble.” God will catch us before there is a full-fledged fall.
- 37:25 – “not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendents begging bread” – God’s presence and God’s provision.
- “nor his descendents begging bread” – This is a great promise for our families. We can then trust Christ with our children.
- 37:27 – “Depart from evil” – He is making a plea for the wicked to repent.
- 37:34 – “Wait...keep His way” – While we are waiting, let us take heed of wavering.
- “inherit the land” – Walking in the fullness of God’s design for your life.
- 37:35 – “like a native green tree” – This is a striking figure of the ungodly man of the world firmly rooted in earthly things.
- 37:36 – “he could not be found” – Fame is fleeting.

37:37 – “Mark the blameless man...the future of that man is peace” – Here is, 1. the godly man’s property; and 2. the godly man’s privilege. His property is perfection; his privilege is peace.

37:40 – “the Lord shall” – There is certainty in His promises.

- “Because they trust in him” – Faith shall insure the safety of the elect.
- “The just shall live by his faith.” (Hab. 2:4)

Chapter 38:

Psalm 38 – This seems to have been written during the time after David’s sin with Bathsheba before his repentance.

- Sin is pleasurable for a season (Heb. 11:25), but then you pay the price.
- “remembrance” – These are the things most people want to forget.
- This psalm is traditionally sung on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) as a representation of Israel’s national sin.
- Among the things which David brought to his own remembrance, the first and foremost were: 1. his past trials and his past deliverances. The great point, however, in David’s psalms is to bring to remembrance: 2. the depravity of our nature.

38:1 – “do not rebuke me in Your wrath” – Just as we do not want to be punished by our fathers when they were still angry, David makes the same request of God.

38:4 – “too heavy for me” – It is well when sin is an intolerable load, and when the remembrance of our sins burdens us beyond endurance.

- It is expedient to have a perfect knowledge of the filthiness of sin.
- Wherever God intends to reveal His Son with power, wherever he intends to make the gospel to be “a sinful sound,” He makes the conscience feel and groan under the burden of sin.

38:5 – “my wounds are foul” – This is the part of sin that TV shows don’t talk about.

- “my wounds...my foolishness” – The wounds and foolishness go together.

38:7 – “loins are full of inflammation” – Some believe this was a venereal disease. Whether or not that is the case, it is evident that this present physical illness is a direct result of his sin.

38:8 – “I am feeble” – The original is “benumbed,” or frozen.

38:9 – “my signing” – Secret tears for secret sins are an excellent sign of a holy heart and a healing balsam for broken spirits.

38:10 – “the light of my eyes, it has also gone from me” – David’s eyes have darkened.

38:11 – “my friends stand aloof” – They didn’t even want to be around David, his illness was that gross.

- The loneliness of a soul passing under the convincing power of the Holy Ghost.

38:12 – “Those also who seek my life” – Sin can leave us vulnerable before our enemies.

38:16 – “they exalt themselves against me” – The least flaw in a saint is sure to be noticed.

38:17 – “I am ready to fall” – The Septuagint translates this “I am ready for scourges;” that is, to suffer correction and punishment for my sins.

- “fall” – The KJV translates this “halt.”

38:18 – “be in anguish over my sin” – To be sorry for sin is no atonement for it, but it is the right spirit in which to repair to Jesus.

38:21 – “Do not forsake me, O Lord” – David doesn’t let his sin keep him from crying out to God.

- The evil one will lie to us and use our guilt as a reason to keep us from God.

38:22 – “Make haste” – He is looking for God to hurry to his rescue.

Chapter 39:

Psalm 39 – The suffering of silence.

- David is still suffering from his “transgressions.” (v. 8)

- “Jeduthun” – David names the song leader for this song. (1 Chron. 16:41-42; 25:1, 6; 2 Chron. 5:12; 35:15)

39:1 – “Lest I sin with my tongue” – David doesn’t understand what God is doing, but he doesn’t want to question God in front of the wicked.

- “Lest I sin” – In his great perplexity, his greatest fear was lest he should sin.
- “restrain my mouth” – “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity...But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” (James 3:6,9)
 - “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matt. 12:34)
 - God must change the source of our words, which is the heart.
- “muzzle” – The original does not so much mean a bridle to check the tongue as a muzzle to stop it altogether. He went so far as to condemn himself to entire silence, “even from good.” (v. 2)
- “the wicked are before me” – Bad men are so sure to misuse even our holiest speech that it is as well not to cast any of our pearls before such swine.

39:3 – “heart was hot within me” – David was really fired up at the wicked. (v. 1)

- Silence is an awful thing for a sufferer; it is the surest method to produce madness.
- “Then I spoke with my tongue” – But David speaks to the Lord.
 - David’s consciousness of his own sin keeps him from firing back at others.
 - The muzzled tongue burned, then burst.

39:4 – “make me to know my end” – David humbly asks God to search him.

- The psalmist would know more of the shortness of life that he might better bear its transient ills.
- “You would weep if you know that your life was limited to one month, yet you laugh while you know not but it may be restricted to a day.” An inscription in a house in Cheshire.

39:5 – “my age is as nothing” – Certainly when compared to eternity.

- “every man” – David realizes that he is no better than any other.

39:6 – “they busy themselves in vain” – Remember that all this noise (for so the word “busy” means), this breach of quiet, is made about unsubstantial, fleeting vanities.

39:7 – “what do I wait for?” – David is realizing that his enemy being destroyed won’t make him feel any better.

- “My hope is in You” – David realizes that bitterness will do him no good.

39:9 – “it was You who did it” – Who can we complain to? God did it; for good or bad.

39:10 – “Your plague” – David now sees his enemy as part of God’s work in David’s life.

- David was constantly under the chastening hand of God. In the historical books, it looks like David goes from victory to victory. But God keeps chastening David to keep him humble and usable.
- “the blow of Your hand” – Sons get punished. (Heb. 12:5-11)

39:12 – “I am a stranger with You” – Not “to You,” but “with You. Like You, my Lord, I am a stranger among the sons of men, an alien from my mother’s children.

- These words may also mean, “I share the hospitality of God;” like a stranger entertained by a generous host.
- “stranger” – All men indeed are strangers and sojourners =, but the saints do best discern it, and most freely acknowledge it.

Chapter 40:

Psalm 40 – Waiting on God’s deliverance from the suffering of sin. (v. 12)

- We cannot get ourselves out of the messes our sin puts us in.
- Praise for God’s faithfulness (v. 1-10); Prayer for God’s deliverance (v. 11-17).

40:1 – “waited patiently” – This is a Hebrew idiom meaning “waiting I waited.”

- Jesus, all through His agony in the Garden, His trial of cruel mockings before Herod and Pilate, and his passion on the tree, he waited in omnipotence of patience. Our Lord’s patience under suffering was an element of perfection in His work.

40:2 – “a horrible pit” – Jeremiah was let down into a muddy pit. (Jer. 38)

40:3 – “new song” – This is one of six new songs in the Psalms.

40:4 – “trust” – Faith obtains the promises.

40:5 – “Your thoughts toward us” – “How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand.” (Ps. 139:17-18)

40:6 – “Sacrifice and offering” – This is a prophecy of Jesus quoted in Heb. 10:5-7.

- “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” (Heb. 10:4)
- We learn from this verse that Jehovah values far more the obedience of the heart than all the imposing performances of ritualistic worship; and that our expiation from sin comes not to us as a result of an elaborate ceremonial, but as the effect of our great Substitute’s obedience to the will of Jehovah.
- “You did not desire” – This is interesting in light of David’s sin with Bathsheba. (Ps. 51:16-17)
- “ears You have opened” – Picture of the willing bondsman. (Exod. 21:1-6; Deut. 15:17)
- “opened” – Lit. “dugged.”

40:7 – “I come” – Immanuel did not send, but came.

- “the scroll of the book” – This is translated as “the volume of the book” in Heb. 10:7.
- The Scriptures are given to reveal Jesus to us. (John 5:39)

40:8 – “I delight” – This is not an oppressive burden, but actually a delight; a fulfillment of what a life is really supposed to be. He was as willing to bleed and die for you as you are to eat when hungry. He was delighted as much to be scourged, wounded, and crucified, as you delight in meat when most delicious.

- “to do Your will” – It was Jesus Who was the doer of the work. Therefore, the work is done; it is finished.

40:9 – “I do not restrain my lips” – The poor listened to Him, and princes heard His rebuke; Publicans rejoiced at Him, and Pharisees raged, but to them both he proclaimed the truth from heaven.

- This intimates that whoever undertook to preach the gospel of Christ would be in great temptation to hide it and conceal it, because it must be preached with great contention, and in the face of great opposition.

40:12 – “My iniquities” – He has no sin, but sins were laid upon Him, and He took them as if they were His. “He was made sin for us.” (2 Cor. 5:21)

40:13-17 – This section is nearly identical to Ps. 70.

40:16 – “such as love Your salvation” – That would apply to His Church.

40:17 – “the Lord thinks upon me” – God’s thinking on us is more significant than us thinking on Him.

- That God would think on us as we are “poor and needy” alleviates all the pressure we tend to place on ourselves to esteem ourselves.

Chapter 41:

Psalm 41 – Suffering the pain of betrayal; this probably refers to David’s experience with Ahithophel. (2 Sam. 15-17)

- David recognizes this is a result of his sin. (v. 4)
- This psalm is also a picture of Jesus when He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. (John 13:18)

41:1 – “Blessed is he who considers the poor” – Much of Scripture speaks of the blessing to those who care for the poor.

- “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given.” (Prov. 19:17)
- How foolish are they that fear to lose their wealth by giving it and fear not to lose themselves by keeping it.
- Identify with the poor.
- “the poor” – This is not referring to the poor of the world in common, nor poor saints in particular, but some single poor man; for the word is in the singular number.
- “The Lord will deliver him” – The promise is not that the generous saint shall have no trouble, but that he shall be preserved in it and in due time brought out of it.
 - Sometimes saints, out of selfishness, try to keep themselves out of trouble by their own strength.

41:2 – “blessed on the earth” – Giving Christians don’t have to wait for eternity for all their rewards.

- 41:3 – “bed of illness” – This seems to refer to the illness that was a direct result of David’s sin. (Ps. 38:7)
- “sustain him on his sickbed” – This is the language peculiar to the God of Israel; He it is Who deigns to become nurse and attendant upon good men.
- 41:4 – “I have sinned against You” – This is speaking of the adultery with Bathsheba. (Ps. 51:3)
- Observe that by the psalmist, sin was felt to be mainly evil because it was directed against God. This is the essence of true repentance.
- 41:5 – “My enemies” – There is a perpetual antithesis in this psalm between the few who have a due regard to the poor in spirit and the many who afflict or desert them.
- 41:6 – “he speaks lies” – These are hypocritical friends. David cannot trust them.
- 41:9 – “my own familiar friend” – This is speaking of Ahithophel. David participates in the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus.
- “The man of my peace,” so runs the original, with whom I had no differences, with whom I was in league, who had aforesaid ministered to my peace and comfort.
 - This is also quoted of Judas Iscariot in John 13:18.
 - The sufferings of the Church, like those of the Redeemer, generally begin at home.
- 41:10 – “Lord, be merciful to me” – David turns to prayer.
- 41:13 – “Blessed be the Lord” – The psalm ends with a doxology; that is, “Let Him be glorified.”
- “Amen and Amen” – This seems to be a doxology for the whole 1st book of Psalms.
 - Each of the five books of the psalms ends with a blessing: Ps. 41:13; Ps. 72:19-20; Ps. 89:52; Ps. 106:48; Ps. 150.

Book 2: Psalms 42-72

The name for God “elohim” is used 188 times in Book 2, as opposed to “Yahweh” which was the main name for God in Book 1.

Chapter 42:

Psalm 42 – Theme: “Cast down” – (v. 5, 6, 11)

- “Contemplation” – (Heb. “Maschil”) This could also mean “instruction.”
- “sons of Korah” – Their leader in the days of David was Heman (Ps. 88) - just as Asaph led the choir of the Gershonites and Jeduthun (Ethan) the choir of the Merarites (see 1 Chron. 6:31-47 and Psalm 39).
- Who should imagine that from the posterity of him who said, “You take too much upon yourselves...” (Num. 16) should have risen those whose sweet psalms would be the heritage of the church of God to the end of time?

- 42:1 – “water brooks” – This speaks of the living water where the spring bubbles up from the ground, in contrast to a pond or stagnant, standing water. (John 4:14)
- “So pants my soul” – The next best thing to living in the light of the Lord’s love is to be unhappy till we have it.
 - “for You, O God” – He desires God. He is not merely attempting to feel better.
 - Self-focus is immaturity. Self-help is stupidity. God-focus is our greatest health.
 - As God’s word reveals to us who He is, our heart should be stirred to know Him more.
 - Trouble is often the tool that drives us to God’s presence. Listen to the experience of a thoroughly gracious and much afflicted saint.
 - Ease he did not seek; honor he did not covet; but the enjoyment of communion with God was an urgent need of his soul.
- 42:2 – “the living God” – A dead God would never be able to help in this situation.
- “appear before God” – “To see the face of God” is a nearer translation of the Hebrew.
- 42:3 – “Where is your God” – What is become of your God that you bragged so of.
- 42:3-4 – “tears...joy” – He has moved from “the voice of joy” to tears.
- 42:5 – “Why?” – Used 10 times in Psalms 42-43.
- “Why are you cast down” – The psalmist is talking to himself.
 - Wicked men oppressed David, and the devil tempted him; yet he chides his own heart and nothing else.
 - “my soul” – His mind. He is exerting his will above his emotions.
 - The psalmist is speaking of something deeper inside himself than what can be seen. God is separating soul from spirit.
 - “disquieted” – More literally, “tumultuated,” a word frequently applied to the roaring, tumult, and tossing of the sea. (See Isa. 17:12; Jer. 5:22; 6:23; 51:55.)
 - “Hope in God” – “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27)
 - There are some trials in life that we have to go through alone. There are some things that only God, and no other human, can do, so we must learn to encourage ourselves in the Lord. (1 Sam. 30:6)
 - Hope never affords more joy than in affliction.
 - “the help of His countenance” – God’s manifest presence.
- 42:6 – “O my God” – The psalmist turns back to speak to God.
- 42:7 – “Your waves and billows have gone over me” – This was repeated by Jonah in Jonah 2:3.
- It is some comfort to remember that the waves and billows are the Lord’s. They are all sent by Him, directed by Him, and achieve His designs, and the child of God, knowing this, is more resigned.
- 42:8 – “command His lovingkindness” – His expression is remarkable. He does not say simply that the Lord will bestow, but “command” His lovingkindness.
- 42:11 – “help of my countenance” – He is asking God to get all of him, his body, soul, and spirit, all on the same page.

Chapter 43:

Psalm 43 – Theme: “Why?” – (v. 2, 2, 5, 5) A psalm for those who are questioning.

43:1 – “an ungodly nation” – This nation may be the Arameans of Damascus. It may be that the author had been taken captive by the Arameans during one of their incursions into Judah, such as that of Hazael (2 Kings 12:17-18). This attack by Hazael affected especially the area in which the Korahites, descendants of Kohath, had been assigned cities; Josh. 21:4, 9-19.

- When people are ungodly, no wonder that they are unjust; those who are not true to God Himself cannot be expected to deal rightly with His people.
- “deliver me” – He is looking for God’s deliverance.
- “the deceitful and unjust man” – Deceit and injustice are boon companions.

43:2 – “God of my strength” – The psalmist understood his own weakness.

- “Why do You cast me off?” – Learn from this question that it is well to enquire into dark providences, but we must enquire of God, not of our own fears.

43:3 – “send out Your light” – “Whatever makes manifest is light.” (Eph. 5:13)

43:4 – “I will go to the altar of God” – The psalmist is asking to be delivered so he could serve and worship God more fully. What he misses is not his family, home, or accommodations, but the special place of God’s presence at the tabernacle/tent.

- “God my exceeding joy” – His soul desired spiritual fellowship; fellowship with God Himself.

43:5 – “Hope in God” – This is the only true hope and help.

- My hopes are better than my present possessions.
- This verse repeats Psalm 42:11.

Chapter 44:

Psalm 44 – “The Psalm of Confusion.” The psalmist is struggling with who God is in reality with the circumstances he is finding himself in.

44:1 – “fathers have told us” – The father’s role as the High Priest of the household enjoins it upon him to speak of God to his children.

- When fathers are tongue-tied religiously with their offspring, need they wonder if their children’s hearts remain sin-tied?
- “the deeds You did” – Remembering God’s work in previous generations.
- While the songs of other nations sing of the heroism of their ancestors, the songs of Israel celebrate the works of God.

44:5 – “Through You” – Mark well that all the conquests of these believers are said to be “through You” and “through Your name.” Never let us forget this, lest going a warfare at our own charges.

44:6 – “I will not trust in my bow” – The less confidence we have in ourselves or in anything beside God, the more evidence we have of the sincerity of our faith in God.

- 44:9 – “But You have cast us off” – The psalmist doesn’t see God working in his life in the same way He has worked in the lives of his predecessors and this creates confusion, especially when there is no obvious sin to attribute to the lack of God’s deliverance. (v. 17)
- “You do not go out with our armies” – We are not sure if this is referring to a specific battle or to general experience.
- 44:11 – “You...have scattered us” – All this is ascribed to the Lord, as being allowed by Him, and even appointed by His decree. It is well to trace the hand of God in our sorrows, for it is surely there.
- 44:12 – “sell Your people for next to nothing” – Referring to the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, Eusebius says: “Many were sold for a small price; there were many to be sold, but few to buy.”
- 44:14 – “shaking of the head” – The people are mocking...as they did to Jesus. (Matt. 27:39)
- 44:17 – “we have not forgotten You” – As far as the psalmist can tell, this present difficulty isn’t the direct result of their deliberate rebellion.
- Those who follow God for that they get will leave Him when persecution is stirred up.
- 44:22 – “sheep for the slaughter” – Paul quotes this in Rom. 8:36, but answers it with “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded...” (Rom. 8:37-39)
- 44:23 – “Awake!” – The psalmist is turning to God in prayer.
- “Why do You sleep” – “He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” (Ps. 121:4)
- 44:26 – “Arise for our help” – He is asking God to work in his days as he did in the past.
- This psalm doesn’t resolve. We live much of our lives waiting for the resolve.
 - When dealing with something you don’t understand, fall back on what you already know.

Chapter 45:

Psalm 45 – “A Song of Love.” Theme: The Messiah coming for His bride.

- “Lilies” – This seems to refer to a particular melody.
 - “Contemplation” – (Heb. “Maschil”) This could also be translated “instruction.”
- 45:1 – “good theme” – The Messiah’s soon return for His bride is a good theme.
- “the pen of a ready writer” – The introduction of this psalm reads as if God is inspiring the writer to answer the questions of Psalm 44.
- 45:2 – “You” – As though the King Himself had suddenly appeared before him, the psalmist turns from his preface to address his Lord.
- “fairer” – The Hebrew word is doubled, “Beautiful, beautiful, You are.”
 - “Grace is poured upon your lips” – The people marveled at Jesus’ teaching.
- 45:3 – “Your sword” – The word of God is compared to such a weapon. (Heb. 4:12)
- It is to be observed, however, that this description of the word of God is applicable to it only when Christ girds it on and employs it as His sword. The Lord holds the handle.

- 45:6 – “Your throne, O God” – This refers to Jesus in Heb. 1:8-9 where God calls Jesus God.
- “scepter of righteousness” – Even when He shall break His enemies with a rod of iron, He will do no man wrong. His vengeance and His grace are both in conformity with justice. Hence, we trust Him without suspicion.
- 45:7 – “You love righteousness and hate wickedness” – To love and hate as He loves and hates is to be perfect as He is perfect.
- 45:8 – “Your garments are scented” – The “fragrance of Christ.” (2 Cor. 4:16)
- “myrrh” – This served as a burial spice for the dead.
- 45:10 – “Listen...Consider...incline...Forget” – The psalmist is pleading with us.
- “Forget...your father’s house” – God desires us to hate father and mother in comparison to our love of Him. (Luke 14:26)
 - “Forget” – We have much to forget as well as to learn, and the unlearning is so difficult that only diligent hearing, and considering, and bending of the whole soul to it, can accomplish the work; and even these would be too feeble did not divine grace assist.
- 45:11 – “your beauty” – Our beauty does not consist in our own virtues, nor even in the gifts which we have received from God, by which we put forth virtues, and do all those things which pertain unto the life of the law; but in this – our apprehending Christ and believing in Him. Then it is that we are truly beautiful; and it is this beauty alone that Christ looks upon, and upon no other.
- 45:14 – “She shall be brought to the King” – As the King’s bride.
- The groom carries tremendous anticipation for his coming bride.
- 45:15 – “they shall be brought” – Do not fail to observe the manner of expression – the Church is brought – she does not come of herself.
- “enter the King’s palace” – This seems to be a picture of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (Rev. 19)

Chapter 46:

Psalm 46 – “A Psalm of the Victorious Kingdom of God.”

- Psalm 46 led Martin Luther to write “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.”
- 46:1 – “God is our refuge” – God Himself, not our armies or our fortresses.
- “is” – Do not forget the fact that God is our refuge just now, in the immediate present, and truly as when the psalmist penned this word.
 - “very present help in trouble” – The words are very emphatic: “He is found an exceeding, or superlative, help in difficulties.”
 - “trouble” – This word describes “people in tight places, in a corner and unable to get out.”
- 46:2 – “we will not fear” – “For God has not given us a spirit of fear.” (2 Tim. 1:7)
- With God on our side, how irrational would fear be?
 - “though the earth be removed” – Luke 21 speaks of the catastrophic events of the last days.

- 46:4 – “There is a river” – There are significant rivers in the Kingdom Age (Ezek. 47) and in Heaven (Rev. 22). Currently, Jerusalem does not have a major river system.
- The great fear of an Eastern city in time of war was lest the water supply should be cut off during a siege.
- 46:5 – “God is in the midst of her” – How near is the Lord to the distresses of His saints, since He sojourns in their midst.
- “at the break of dawn” – The restoration of the Jews will be one of the first things at the season of the second advent.
- 46:6 – “moved” – Lit. “totter.”
- “He uttered His voice” – How mighty is a word from God.
 - “the earth melted” – This is something that hasn’t happened yet. (2 Pet. 3:10-13)
- 46:8 – “desolations in the earth” – The ruined cities of Assyria, Babylon, Petra, Bashan, and Canaan are our instructors.
- 46:9 – “He makes wars cease” – This is because Jesus is ruling and reigning with a rod of iron.
- No human person or agency will bring this kind of peace.
- 46:10 – “Be still” – Lit. “hands off.” Surrender and quit striving.
- “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel.” (2 Tim. 2:24)
 - Some scholars say this is a heart-felt plea to unbelievers to drop their weapons before the war.
 - “know that I am God” – The sole consideration that God is God, sufficient to still all objections to His sovereignty.
- 46:11 – “Lord of hosts is with us” – Jesus is our Emmanuel, God with us.

Chapter 47:

- Psalm 47 – Psalm of the New Year. Ancient Israel would read this psalm 7 times before blowing the trumpets on Rosh Hashanah.
- This is a look at the Kingdom Age.
- 47:1 – “clap your hands” – The voice of melody is not so much to be uttered with the tongue as with the hands; that is, it is our deeds not our words by which God is here to be praised.
- “all you peoples” – The joy is to extend to all nations; Israel may lead the van, but all the Gentiles are to follow in the march.
- 47:2 – “a great King over all the earth” – How glorious will that era be when this is seen and known of all; when in the person of Jesus all flesh shall behold the glory of the Lord.
- 47:5 – “God has gone up with a shout” – The fight is over; the conqueror ascends to His triumphal chariot, and rides up to the gates of the city which is made resplendent with the joy of His return.
- “shout...trumpet” – “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.” (1 Thess. 5:16)

47:7 – “Sing praises with understanding” – “Those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:24)

- God doesn't want merely emotional worship. (Matt. 15:8)
- Do they not often offer to God strains far more calculated for human amusement than for divine acceptance? An understanding enlightened of the Holy Spirit is then and then only fully capable of offering worthy praise.

47:9 – “the shields of the earth belong to God” – Any protection on earth is of God.

Chapter 48:

Psalm 48 – Psalm of the Greatness of the City. Zion is Jerusalem, the city of the great King. (v. 2)

48:1 – “Great is the Lord” – We can all see that He is great in the deliverance of His people.

48:2 – “elevation” – This seems to speak of what will happen before or during the Kingdom Age. Earthquakes will change the geography of the region (Rev. 16:18) and there will be a highway of holiness there (Isa. 35:8).

- “city of the great king” – The King is what makes this city great.

48:3 – “God is in her palaces” – Jesus will be sitting there and we shall see Him.

48:5 – “so they marveled” – The arrogant rulers of the earth will marvel at God and His work in the lives of his people.

48:10 – “right hand is full of righteousness” – There will be great clarity between right and wrong.

- God's scepter and sword, His government and vengeance, are altogether just.

48:11 – “Zion” – Jerusalem points to the heavenly city. (Heb. 12:22)

48:13 – “tell it to the generation following” – This is God's heart for the next generation. His faithfulness to us is a testimony to them.

- The security of the people of God is not a doctrine to be kept in the background.

48:14 – “Our God forever and ever” – He is the only thing we can have forever.

Chapter 49:

Psalm 49 – Theme: The best things of life cannot be bought with money,

- “Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” (Is. 55:1)

49:2 – “Rich and poor” – Both struggle with contentment regarding money. (1 Tim. 6:17)

49:6 – “who trust in their wealth” – “How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God.” (Mark 10:24)

- Riches are deceitful promising what they cannot deliver. (Matt. 13:22)

- 49:8 – “the redemption of their souls” – Salvation cannot be purchased with money.
- Our salvation has already been purchased by “the precious blood of Christ.” (1 Pet. 1:18-19)
 - “it shall cease forever” – The “it” is the iniquity and judgment that Christ has cleansed and satisfied.
- 49:11 – “inner thought is that their houses will last forever” – Deep down in their hearts, though they dare not say so, they fancy that earthly goods are real and enduring.
- “lands after their own names” – In an attempt to live on after death, they name lands, universities, buildings, or churches after themselves.
- 49:12 – “man, though in honor, does not remain” – Money cannot keep you from dying.
- “like the beasts that perish” – A life dominated by its physical appetites.
- 49:13 – “the way of those who are foolish” – The folly of man seldom appears more than in being busy about nothing.
- “approve their sayings” – Studying or using quotes from men successful according to the world’s standards.
- 49:14 – “in the morning” – Referring to resurrection.
- The sweetest reflection to the upright is that “the morning” here begins an endless, changeless day.
- 49:15 – “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave” – An Old Testament reference to resurrection.
- 49:17 – “carry nothing away” – Whatever we have accumulated, we leave it behind when we die.
- 49:18 – “he blesses himself” – He pronounced himself happy. He had his good things in this life. His chief end were to bless and please himself.
- “do well for yourself” – Speaking of worldly wealth.
- 49:19 – “never see light” – Outer and eternal darkness.
- With heaven in view, standing in the presence of His light, the wealth of this world pales in comparison.

Chapter 50:

Ps. 50 – “The Psalm of the Judge.”

- “Asaph” – The first of Asaph’s 12 psalms. He was called a “seer” in 2 Chron. 29:30.

50:1 – “Mighty One, God the Lord” – (Hebrew “El Elohim Yahweh”) Lit. “God, gods, Jehovah.”

- The only other place this construct of God’s name is used is in Josh. 22:22.
- “Has spoken” – God speaks and we have His word.

50:3 – “Out God shall come” – “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20)

50:4 – “to the heavens from above, and to the earth” – God is calling all the nations to stand before Him.

50:5 – “sacrifice” – It is Christ’s sacrifice that makes us the people of God.

- 50:6-7 – “Judge...My people” – Judgment begins at the house of God. (1 Pet. 4:17)
- This psalm declares the futility of external worship when spiritual faith is absent and the mere outward ceremonial is rested in.
- 50:8 – “not rebuke you for your sacrifices” – The problem is not with the sacrifices, they were ordained by the Scriptures. The problem is with their motivation.
- The solution to empty obedience is not in throwing out the form, but in changing the motive.
 - “sacrifices” – The sacrificial system is for man, not for God. God wants something for them, not something from them.
- 50:10 – “every beast of the forest is Mine” – Yet, how many make God look broke?
- God is not dependant upon His people. He is the initiator in this relationship. (James 1:17)
 - We show our scorn of God’s sufficiency by secret thoughts of meriting from Him by any religious act, as though God could be indebted to us, and obliged by us. As though our devotions could bring a blessedness to God more than He essentially has.
- 50:12 – “If I were hungry” – They seem to be sacrificing to God in order to appease Him.
- The Jewish sacrificial system is different from the sacrifices to pagan gods. The pagans thought they could appease God through sacrifice. The Hebrews knew they were sacrificing by faith in response to the promise of Gen. 3:15.
- 50:14-15 – God is looking for His people to be Thankful, Truthful, and Trustful.
- “thanksgiving” – This is looking to thank offering of the sacrifice of the innocent substitute.
 - The animals, not the worshippers, were examined before sacrifice.
 - “pay your vows” – God is looking for truth and honesty. (Ps. 51:6)
 - God cannot and will not have a relationship with pretenders.
 - “Call upon Me” – God is willing to accept any excuse people have for turning to and trusting Him. (Jer. 33:3)
 - God never reproves the one who runs to Him “in the day of trouble” for in the hour of peril we fly to those we love.
 - Hanker not after other helpers, rely on Him only, fully trusting Him in the use of such means as He prescribes and affords.
- 50:16 – “to the wicked” – Now God addresses and judges the unbelieving world.
- Simply turning from empty religion is not enough, but we must also turn to the Lord.
 - “take My covenant in your mouth” – They are claiming to be God’s people.
 - There are tares among the wheat. (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43)
 - This is false religion, claiming God’s favor, yet choosing to live in opposition to His expressed will as they have “cast My words behind you.”
 - It is hypocrisy to openly violate God’s moral law, and yet at the same time to be sticklers for His ceremonial commands.
- 50:17 – “you hate instruction” – Profane professors are often too wise to learn, too besotted with conceit to be taught of God. It is an ill sign when a man dares not look Scripture in the face.
- 50:18 – “consented with him” – They are agreeing and supporting others in their sin.
- They consented to the deeds of Barabbas, a robber, when they preferred him to Jesus Christ.

50:21 – “thought I was altogether like you” – People misinterpret God’s patience for acceptance, approval, or weakness when in fact He is attempting to give them space to repent. (2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 2:1-5)

- Such is the blindness and corruption of our nature till with the eye of faith we see His face in the glass of the Word.
- “set them in order” – Lit. “set in order.” One day, God will set the record straight.

50:22 – “consider this” – This is God’s challenge to the people.

- We shall give account of all our deeds.
- “forget” – Lit. “set aside.”
- “Lest” – This is a word of God’s grace as He gives them an opportunity to repent.

50:23 – “Whoever offers praise glorifies Me” – The sacrifices were not gifts in themselves pleasing to God, but were to be tributes of their gratitude.

- “offers praise...orders his conduct” – God expects our talk and walk to match.
- “show the salvation of God” – Jesus means “Jehovah is salvation.”

Chapter 51:

Psalm 51 – “David’s Great Psalm of Repentance.”

- “To the Chief Musician” – Therefore, this psalm was not written for private meditation only, but for the public service of song.
- David “turned not aside from the commandment of the Lord all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.” (1 Kings 15:5)

51:1 – “mercy” – God’s great mercy is a tremendous hope in the midst of repentance. He appeals at once to the mercy of God, even before he mentions his sin.

- “multitude of Your tender mercies” – As He is an infinite God, so His mercies are infinite.
- Our sins are all finite and stand futile in comparison to His eternity.
- “Blot out” – The Hebrew speaks of an accounting move to remove debt from a ledger.
- The sin must be blotted out because you cannot change it or undo it.
- “transgressions” – Lit “to step across the line.” David sinned in rebellion to God’s will as it was expressed in the Scriptures.
- No other king of his time would have felt any compunction for having acted as he did.

51:2 – “Wash me” – Lit. “scrub me thoroughly.”

- He desires to be rid of the whole mass of his filthiness. His loudest cries are against the evil of his transgression and not against the painful consequences of it.
- “iniquity” – Lit. “bent or twisted.”
- Straight comes in one form, but twisted can look many different ways.
- “cleanse me” – This is a term for the priest, not the doctor.

51:3 – “my sin is always before me” – To an awakened conscience, pain on account of sin is not transient and occasional, but intense and permanent.

- David owns his sin and confesses it as his own.

51:4 – “You only” – Not Bathsheba, not Uriah, not the baby that died, not Ahithophel, not Joab, or Tamar, or Amnon, or Absalom, but God alone, because it was God who wrote “You shall not commit adultery.” (Exod. 20:14)

- There is an godly sorrow which leads a man to life because he mourns for sin because it has displeased God.
- An awareness of the presence of God before the sin may have helped to prevent the sin.

51:5 – “Behold” – Lit. “Consider this.” This is spoken twice in 2 verses.

- “brought forth in iniquity” – Sin is a matter of the heart, not just of actions. It is as if he said, “Not only have I sinned this once, but I am in my very nature a sinner.”

51:6 – “the inward parts” – God is looking to the heart and He looks for Truth there.

51:7 – “hyssop” – The bush used to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice, used in the cleansing of the leper in Lev. 13-14, and seen on the pole given to Jesus on the cross.

- “I shall be clean” – The passage may be read in faith. He is asking for the reality which the legal ceremonies symbolize.
- “I shall be whiter than snow” – Scarcely does Holy Scripture contain a verse more full of faith than this. Considering the nature of the sin and the deep sense of the psalmist had of it, it is a glorious faith to be able to see in the blood sufficient, nay, all-sufficient merit to purge it away.

51:9 – “Hide Your face from my sins” – In v. 3, he said his sin was always before him. Now, he prays that God would put it out of His sight.

- After our salvation, when God looks at us, He sees Jesus in us.

51:10-12 – “Create...Restore” – Forgiveness is instantaneous; restoration is a process.

- When David’s sin was unconfessed and “always before me” (v. 3), during that year, he could not experience the “joy” he speaks of in v. 12.

51:10 – “Create” – (Hebrew “barra”) Lit. “to create out of nothing.” This is not repair or rehab, but new. This is regeneration, not rehabilitation.

- David is looking for something supernatural.
- “a clean heart” – In v. 7, he asked to be clean; now he seeks a heart suitable to that cleanliness.
- “steadfast spirit” – David is speaking of his character.

51:11 – “Do not cast me away from Your presence” – He knows he deserves to be forever denied admission to the courts of God.

- “do not take Your Holy Spirit from me” – The OT saint didn’t know of the indwelling Spirit, but they did know of the Spirit’s work of coming upon. It seems David is crying out that he not lose the power and presence of the Spirit.
- Samson would be an example of one who lost the Spirit upon his life. (Judges 14:19; 15:14; 16:20)

51:12 – “joy” – Joy sits on the other side of repentance and brokenness.

- How much depression in this world is a result of sin and a lack of brokenness?
- “uphold me” – I am tempted to think that I am now an established Christian, but I need to be upheld, not trust in my own goodness or strength.

51:13 – “teach transgressors Your ways” – That is why we have this psalm.

- David wants to be cleansed and restored so that he can be useful again.

51:14 – “the guilt of bloodshed” – The murder of Uriah, the Hittite.

- “sing aloud of Your righteousness” – One would rather have expected him to say, “I will sing of Your mercy.” But it is in fact the righteousness of divine mercy which is its greatest wonder.
- God is “just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:26)

51:15 – “open my lips” – David picks up the harp again.

- David seems rather to intimate that his mouth must be shut until God called him to the exercise of thanksgiving by extending pardon.
- David was never the same king or father after his sin, but he was a much better psalmist after his repentance.

51:16 – “do not desire sacrifice” – There were no sacrifices for murder and adultery.

- God is not looking for empty religious practices.

51:17 – “broken spirit” – His spirit mirrors that of Jesus Christ who was “a Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.” (Isa. 53:3)

- Brokenness cries out to the Lord and appeals to God’s mercy and grace.
- Brokenness gets one past oneself and makes one able to own their sin.
- Is a thing that is broken good for anything? Can we drink in a broken glass? Or can we lean upon a broken staff? But though other things may be worse for breaking, yet a heart is never at the best till it be broken; for till it be broken we cannot see what is in it.
- “contrite” – Lit. “crushed, crumbling.”
- “You will not despise” – Even though hundreds of people may look down on you and you sin, God will not despise you in repentance.

51:18 – “Your good pleasure to Zion” – David wanted God to bless Jerusalem and didn’t want his own sin to stumble or hurt anyone else.

Chapter 52:

Ps. 52 – “Doeg the Edomite” – David, while fleeing from Saul, lied to Ahimelech to get food and weapons from the priests at Nob which led to Doeg murdering all the priests. (1 Sam. 21-22)

- “Doeg” – The name comes from the Hebrew verb meaning “anxiety.”
 - Doeg told the truth about Ahimelech helping David, but he communicated it to Saul in a malicious way. In turn, Saul got Doeg to kill 85 innocent priest of Ahimelech’s family.
 - We are to be grieved by the enemies within, but never fear the enemies without. (Compare Psalms 51 and 52.)

52:1 – “Why do you boast in evil” – Doeg had small matter for boasting in having procured the slaughter of a band of defenseless priests. A mighty man indeed to kill men who never touched a sword.

- Look here, and read the epitaph of a mighty man, who lorded it proudly during his little hour and set his heel upon the necks of the Lord’s chosen.

52:2 – “tongue” – James 3 speaks of the power and the wickedness of the tongue.

- James speaks of the tongue as a fire. Under control, fire is great and useful. Out of control, a fire is entirely destructive.

52:4 – “deceitful tongue” – Men can manage to say a great many furious things and yet cover all over with the pretext of justice.

52:5 – “destroy” – Lit. “beat down.”

52:7 – “the abundance of his riches” – What wealth did Saul offer Doeg for killing those priests?
- “strengthened himself” – The continual goal of the wicked is to look out for himself, doing anything to anyone else to achieve his own advancement.

52:8 – “like a green olive tree” – Olive trees can live for hundreds of years.

52:9 – “Your name, for it is good” – God is good, especially when compared to a Doeg.

Chapter 53:

Psalm 53 is nearly identical to Psalm 14 except for:

1. “Elohim” is used in place of “Yahweh” in vv. 2, 4, 5, and 6, and
 2. Ps. 53 includes “Where no fear was...encamps against you” in v. 5.
- “Mahalath” – means “disease.”
 - This psalm is “The Song of Man’s Disease.”

53:1 – “said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” – This he does because he is a fool.

- “no God” – This being interpreted means no law, no order, no restraint to lust, and no limit to passion.
- “none who does good” – This is the fruit of putting God out of society.
 - This is situational ethics.
 - Out theology determines our practice.

53:2 – “God looks down from heaven” – God is still there, even when people below are saying that He doesn’t exist.

- Where God’s eyes see no favorable sign we may rest assured there is none.

53:3 – “corrupt” – (Heb. neelachu”) Lit. “sour, rancid.” As milk that has soured.

- “none who does good” – There are many in religion that try on their own to not do wrong things. They are guilty of many sins of omission. This may make monks, but it doesn’t make them good.
- “No, not one” – Paul quotes this verse in Rom. 3:10.
 - The fearful depravity of your heart, let me tell you what it is – you have a heart that would kill God if you could.

53:4 – “as they eat bread” – That is, they have no more scruple in devouring these people than in eating a morsel of bread.

53:5 – “Where no fear was” – This is paranoia, fear for no reason.

- Behold how fearful a hell a wounded conscience is.

53:6 – “brings back the captivity of His people” – Speaking of the Jews returning to their land.

- This answers the question, “When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8)

Chapter 54:

Psalm 54 – “Ziphites” – They gave away David’s hiding spots to Saul twice. (1 Sam. 23; 26)

- Ziph means “refining.”
- Outline: vv. 1-3 – Pleading with God, vv. 4-7 – Praising to God.

54:1 – “Save me, O God” – This is a prayer.

- This is when every land rejects him and denies him rest.
- “Your name” – This encompasses all that God is. His name portrays His nature.

54:3 – “They have not set God before them” – David felt that atheism lay at the bottom of the enmity which pursued him.

- “Selah” – Enough of this!

54:4 – “God is with those” – There is more joy in God’s felt presence than grief in felt trouble.

54:5 – “He will repay my enemies” – This is a statement of faith based on the word of God to him.

54:6 – “freely sacrifice to You” – The more we receive, the more we ought to give.

- “I will praise Your name” – This is coming from a 20-year-old man who has been betrayed.

Chapter 55:

Psalm 55 – “Psalm of Betrayal.”

- Vv. 12-14, 20-21 refer to David’s trusted, but bitter, counselor, Ahithophel.
- David is 50 years old at this time and dealing with the consequences of his sin.

55:1 – “Give ear to my prayer” – Note well that it is never the bare act of prayer which satisfies the godly; they crave an audience with heaven and an answer from the throne, and nothing less will content them.

- “my prayer, O God” – David turns to God after his mistake and while in persecution.
- This is a prayer of the man, Jesus Christ, in His humiliation, despised, and rejected of men.

55:2 – “moan noisily” – Jesus “in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear.” (Heb. 5:7)

55:4 – “terrors of death” – Some believe David was suffering an illness at this time.

- Think of our Lord in the garden, with His “soul exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.” (Matt. 26:37)
- The fear of death is upon all flesh. (Heb. 2:15)

55:6 – “I would fly away” – David would simply like to run away.

- He saw no way of escape except by some improbable or impossible means.
- “be at rest” – A believer is willing to lose the world for the enjoyment of grace.

55:9 – “Destroy, O Lord” – David must let God take vengeance.

55:11 – “Destruction is in its midst” – Jerusalem has become a dangerous place to live.

- 55:12 – “Then I could bear it” – There is great pain in a friend who was once trusted and shared the work, but has now turned away from the work and against us. If our enemies proudly boast over us, we nerve our souls for resistance, but when those who pretend to love us leer at us with contempt, where shall we go?
- None are such real enemies as false friends.
 - Our blessed Lord had to endure at its worst the deceit and faithlessness of His favored disciple, Judas.
- 55:15 – “Let death seize them” – This prayer is a prophecy of the utter, the final, the everlasting ruin of all those who, whether secretly or openly, oppose and rebel against the Lord’s anointed.
- “go down alive into hell” – There is no need to read this verse as an imprecation; it is rather a confident expectation or prophesy.
- 55:17 – “Evening and morning and at noon” – To begin, continue, and end the day with God is supreme wisdom. (Dan. 6:10)
- Day and night he saw his enemies busy (v. 10), and therefore he would meet their activity by continuous prayer.
 - If our poor, frail bodies need refreshment from food three times a day, who that knows his own weakness will say that we need not as frequent refreshment for our poor, frail spirits?
 - “I will pray” – Rather than fighting, David is praying.
- 55:19 – “God will hear” – The voice of slander, malice, and pride is not alone heard by those whom it grieves; it reaches heaven.
- “Because they do not change” – It is a very manifest fact that long-continued ease and pleasure are sure to produce the worst influences upon graceless men. Though troubles do not convert them, yet the absence of them makes their corrupt nature more readily develop itself.
- 55:21 – “The words of his mouth” – Ahithophel spoke as the oracles of God. (2 Sam. 16:23)
- “smoother than butter” – Beware of a man who has too much honey on his tongue; a trap is to be suspected where the bait is so tempting. Soft, smooth, oily words are most plentiful where truth and sincerity are most scarce.
- 55:22 – “Cast Your burden on the Lord” – “Casting all your care upon the Him, for He cares for you.” (1 Pet. 5:7)
- “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” (Phil. 4:6)
 - “on the Lord” – Only God is the trustworthy friend who will never betray us.
- 55:23 – “not live out half their days” – Shortly after this Ahithophel committed suicide and Absalom died in battle.

Chapter 56:

Psalm 56 – “captured in Gath” – David fled to Gath, but was soon taken to the king. So he pretended madness so the king of Gath would send him away. (1 Sam. 21)

56:1 – “merciful” – We have to throw ourselves onto the mercies of God because humans have no mercy.

56:3 – “Whenever I am afraid” – It is possible, then, for fear and faith to occupy the mind at the same moment.

- David doesn't rot in his fear, he responds to his fear.
- “I will trust in You” – It was at this time that God was taking away every human support from David.

56:4 – “What can flesh do to me?” – “And do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him...” (Matt. 10:28)

56:5 – “twist my words” – They are making his words to say something he had not intended.

- This is a common mode of warfare among the ungodly. They put language on the rack; they extort meanings from it which it cannot be made fairly to contain.

56:6 – “They hide” – Men of malice are men of cowardice.

56:8 – “my wanderings” – David can see God's hand even in his problematic wanderings.

- “my tears into Your bottle” – This speaks of God's watchfulness and care for us.
 - Many times, we cry because we don't think anybody sees us or cares.
 - “But the very hairs of your head are numbered.” (Matt. 10:30)
 - “So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord.” (Mal. 3:16)

56:9 – “God is for me” – This was the driving force in David's life, even at a young age.

- “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31)
- God is for us in Jesus Christ.

56:10 – “praise His word” – This is the God who calls things that are not as though they were. (Rom. 4:17)

56:12 – “Vows made to You” – Psalm 63 refers to vows made by David while he was in Gath.

56:13 – “walk before God” – Here is the loftiest reach of a good man's ambition, to dwell with God, to walk in righteousness before Him, to rejoice in His presence, and in the light and glory which it yields.

- “the light of the living” – This was David's hope for this life.
 - Don't wait until heaven for this reality to be evident in your life.

Chapter 57:

Psalm 57 – “Do Not Destroy” – There are 4 “Destroy not” psalms: Ps. 57, 58, 59, and 75.

- This excellent psalm was composed by David when there was enough to discompose the best man in the world.
- “Michtam” – This is another “Golden Psalm of David.”
- “the cave” – After David had returned to Judah from Gath, he hid in a cave at Adullam. (1 Sam. 22:1)
 - It was at Adullam that God built David’s future army and government.
 - In this psalm, God is referred to 21 times in 11 verses.

57:1 – “O God” – David turns to prayer when pursued.

- The focus is clearly on God right from the start.
- “in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge” – Referring to God’s presence as He dwells under the wings of the cherubim above the mercy seat.
 - Refuge is not found in a location or in a vacation, but in the manifest presence of God.

57:3 – “would swallow me up” – If I were to take you to my house and say that I had an exquisitely fat man and wished you to join me in eating him, your indignation could be restrained by nothing. But you are cannibals who eat men’s honor and name, and you rejoice in it.

57:4 – “I lie among the sons of men” – It is a mighty triumph of faith when we can lie down among firebrands and find rest, because God is our defense.

- “their tongue a sharp sword” – They got at David with the tongue.

57:7 – “My heart is steadfast” – “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.” (Isa. 26:3)

- He is calm, firm, happy, resolute, and established in the midst of a cave.
- “I will sing and give praise” – Whether saints conquer or are conquered, they still sing on.

57:8 – “Awake” – David opens every day in prayer.

57:11 – “Be exalted, O God, above the heavens” – David seems to desire that God be exalted more than he desires to be safe and have it easy. (v. 5)

- Greater words of prayer than these never came from human lips. Heaven and earth have, as they imply, a mutually interwoven history, and the blessed, glorious end of this is the sunrise of the divine glory over both.

Chapter 58:

Psalm 58 – “Prayer Against Injustice in Places of Power.”

- David’s psalms of vengeance do not annul God’s call to love our enemies, but they do show sincerity from a follower of God.

58:1 – “silent ones” – He who refrains from defending the right is himself an accomplice in the wrong.

- “judge uprightly” – “What everybody says must be true” is a lying proverb based upon presumption.

58:2 – “in heart you work wickedness” – They do not oppress grossly, but with a kind of exactness and skill, they sit down and consider what and how much violence they may use in such a case, or how much a person can endure, or such a season may bear.

- 58:3 – “wicked are estranged from the womb” – The wickedness of their heart is evident in all the decision they make. This is the number one problem with human government.
- “The authorities that exist are appointed by God...For he is God’s minister to you for good.” (Rom. 13:1,4)
 - The judges of the OT system were called “elohim” – gods, for they were to govern at the direction of God in place of God before the people. (Exod. 21:6)
 - “speaking lies” – To be untruthful is one of the surest proofs of a fallen state, and since falsehood is universal, so also is human depravity.
 - Of all sins, no sin can call Satan “father” like to lying.
- 58:4 – “poison” – Sin is poison.
- “deaf” – People in positions of authority won’t listen.
 - They don’t speak up either – “you silent ones.” (v. 1)
- 58:5 – “not heed the voice of charmers” – Ungodly men are not to be won to right by arguments, the most logical, or appeals, the most pathetic. It is not in your music, but in the sinner’s ear, that the cause of failure lies, and it is only the power of God that can remove it.
- 58:6 – “Break their teeth in their mouth” – He wants God to render them powerless. He is asking God to end their wickedness.
- We are instructed to “Abhor what is evil” as well as “Cling to what is good.” (Rom. 12:9)
- 58:9 – “Before your pots can feel” – God’s judgment will come suddenly.
- In the very midst of the man’s life, and in the fury of his rage against the righteous, the persecutor is overwhelmed with a tornado, his designs are baffled, his contrivances defeated, and himself destroyed.
 - If they will not turn, let them be removed. Then the fellowship of the saints with each other and their God will be very sweet.
 - “thorns” – Used as kindling to start fires.
 - In modern vernacular, we would say “a flash in the pan.”
- 58:10 – “wash his feet in the blood” – As Jesus will trample the winepress of the wrath of God. (Rev. 14:20; 19:13)
- The damnation of sinners shall not mar the happiness of the saints.

Chapter 59:

Psalm 59 – “when Saul sent men...to kill him” – 1 Sam. 19:11-18.

- Whom God preserves, Satan cannot destroy.

59:1 – “Deliver me” – David turns to God first.

59:3 – “The mighty” – They have all the resources necessary to obliterate David.

59:4 – “Through no fault of mine” – The innocence of the godly will not secure them from the malignity of the wicked.

- Though our innocence will not secure us from troubles, yet it will greatly support and comfort us under our troubles.
- “Awake” – “He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” (Ps. 121:4)

- 59:5 – “punish all” – David wants all the wicked taken care of.
- “Do not be merciful to any wicked transgressors” – Be merciful to them as men, but not as transgressors. If they continue hardened in their sin, do not wink at their oppression.
- 59:7 – “they say, ‘Who hears?’” – When men have none to call them to account, there is no accounting for that they will do.
- 59:9 – “I will wait for You” – This can also be translated, “I will keep watch to You.”
- “God is my defense” – Amazing perspective from a 20-year-old man running for his life and losing his family and his country.
 - God will defend us when we let Him and choose not to defend ourselves.
 - David is the anointed king of Israel at this time.
- 59:12 – “the sin of their mouth” – Sins of the lips are real sins and punishable sins.
- He who takes the will for the deed will take the word for the deal and deal with them accordingly.
- 59:13 – “Consume them” – If they could be reformed, it would be infinitely better.
- “let them know” – The idea is “let all the nations know.”
 - “God rules in Jacob” – Despite the imperfections and manipulations of Jacob.
- 59:15 – “They wander up and down for food” – See the restlessness of wicked men.
- 59:16 – “I will sing” – David is determined to sing, even in adversity.

Chapter 60:

- Psalm 60 – “fought against Mesopotamia” – At a time when David was making advances toward Babylon, the Edomites advanced against the unprotected hinder parts of the nation. David then sent his army back to deal with the Edomites. (2 Sam. 8:13; 1 Chron. 18:12)
- “For teaching” – Songs can be used for teaching. And because they teach, we need to be careful that they are Biblical.
 - Here we see the Lord dividing the spoil and bearing testimony to the glory of God.
- 60:1 – “You have cast us off” – David saw every defeat in battle as a result of a prior defeat spiritually.
- All of David’s trouble began in his own heart.
 - “Cast us off” – Lit. “to be foul, rancid, offensive.” This means God has seemed to treat them as if they were loathsome or offensive to Him.
- 60:4 – “given a banner to those who fear You” – The Lord has given us the standard of the gospel; let us live to uphold it and, if needful, die to defend it. For as surely as God is true, He will give success to His own word.
- 60:6 – “God has spoken” – God had promised David and Israel the victory.
- “I will rejoice” – This can also be translated, “I will triumph.”
 - No matter what, we can rest on the Word and promises of God.
- 60:7 – “Gilead...Manasseh” – East and west of the Jordan River.

60:8 – “Moab...Edom...Philistia” – East, south, and west of Israel.

- “washpot” – The vessel in which they would wash their feet.

60:9 – “Who will bring me to this strong city?” – Holiness lead to great confidence.

- “Edom” – A possible reference to Petra, the city used to hide God’s people in the tribulation. (Rev. 12:1-6; Isa. 16:1-5)

60:11 – “the help of man is useless” – This is an amazing perspective from a military commander.

- “The flesh profits nothing.” (John 6:63)

60:12 – “do valiantly” – Lit. “do mighty things.”

Chapter 61:

Psalm 61 – Theme: “Trusting in God While Under Threat.”

- Psalms 61-64 all seem to be written in the context of Absalom’s overthrow of Jerusalem and David fleeing the city. Delitzsch is correct in entitling it, “Prayer and thanksgiving of an expelled King on his way back to his throne.”

61:1 – “Hear my cry” – Pharisees may rest in their prayers; true believers are eager for an answer to them.

- “prayer” – (Hebrew “ranah”) Lit. “to shout or shrill out for joy.”

61:2 – “From the end of the earth” – He feels that he is at the end of the world, as far away from friends and help as possible.

- Tribulation brings us to God and brings God to us. Faith’s greatest victories are achieved in her heavier trials.
- “When my heart is overwhelmed” – David knows that God’s punishment is tempered with mercy.
 - It is more the image of one overtaken by the tide. A few minutes more, and the waves will be around him. It is at this point that he sees the rock high above the waves.
- “the rock that is higher than I” – He doesn’t merely want God to commiserate with him, but also to pull him out of the pit he is now in.
- “the rock” – That is God. (Deut. 32:4)

61:3 – “You have been a shelter for me” – David has some experience turning to God for shelter.

- “strong tower” – The high ground was a military advantage.

61:4 – “in Your tabernacle forever” – He is speaking of God’s presence. (v. 7)

- David left the earthly tabernacle and the ark of the covenant back in Jerusalem.

61:5 – “the heritage of those who fear your name” – Leaving a godly heritage is one of David’s greatest desires.

- All the privileges of all the saints are also the privilege of each one.

61:7 – “He shall abide before God forever” – The Lord Jesus is here referred to.

61:8 – “daily perform my vows” – David will sin again by numbering the people. (2 Sam. 24)

- In all of David’s sins, he never left God.

Chapter 62:

Psalm 62 – “Psalm of Trusting God Alone.”

62:1 – “Truly” – Lit. “only.”

- “silently waits” – Lit. “whispers.”
 - David knows to “Be still and know that I am God.” (Ps. 46:10)
- “waits for God” – To wait upon God, and for God, is the habitual position of faith. (Hab. 2:3-4)

62:2 – “He only” – David is emphatic that it is only God. (v. 6)

- “my rock” – The rock is God Himself (Deut. 32:4); Jesus (1 Cor. 10:4).
 - “When my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” (Ps. 61:2)

62:4 – “They delight in lies” – Hypocrisy.

62:5 – “wait silently for God alone” – David is not taking the situation into his own hands.

- “It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.” (Lam. 3:26)
- They trust no God at all who trust Him not alone.
- “My expectation is from Him” – We expect from God because we believe in Him.

62:6 – “I shall not be moved” – David changes from not being “greatly moved” (v. 2), to not being “moved” at all.

62:5-7 – “My soul...my refuge” – Observe how the psalmist owns his relationship with God.

62:8 – “Trust in Him at all times, you people” – David encourages his people with the same perspective he had through the trial.

- “Pour out your heart before Him” – According to our love, so is our faith and trust in God.

62:9 – “Men of high degree are a lie” – There are really no men of high degree. Position and power in this world is an illusion.

- Heaven is the greatest reality. We are currently living in shadowlands.
- Our estimate of man depends upon our estimate of God.
- “altogether lighter than vapor” – Vanity is nothing, but there is a condition worse than nothing. Confidence in the things or persons of this world, but most of all a confidence in ourselves, will bring us at last to that state wherein we would fain be nothing, and cannot.
 - For this reason are they a lie, because they promise so much, and in the end, when relied upon yield nothing but disappointment.

62:10 – “If riches increase” – “Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare.” (1 Tim. 6:9)

- “But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Luke 12:31)
- “Do not set your heart on them” – The problem is in the heart, not merely in the increase of riches.

62:11 – “power belongs to God” – This is the great thing we are apt to question in cases of difficulty.

62:11-12 – “power...mercy” – I wonder to find so constantly in Scripture that the inspired writers put “merciful” and “mighty,” “terrible,” and “great” all together.

Chapter 63:

Psalm 63 – “in the wilderness” – David is either running from Saul or from Absalom.

- This psalm was prescribed for daily public prayer in the early church.
- The distinguishing word of this psalm is “early.” (v. 1)

63:1 – “O God” – In the Hebrew, this psalm begins “Elohim, El.”

- “You are my God” – No desert can keep us from God. (Gen. 16:13-14; Exod. 3:1-4; 1 Kings 19:4-18; Rev. 12:6-14)
- Our knowledge of God is limited only by our desire.
- “a dry and thirsty land” – David is speaking of an internal condition.

63:2 – “in the sanctuary” – It is our regular worship that prepares us for the crisis experiences of life. What life does to us depends on what life finds in us.

- Every devout soul which has loved to see God in His house will be refreshed by visions of God in the wilderness of solitude, sorrow, sickness, and death.
- “To see Your power and Your glory” – The sight of God was enough for David, but nothing short of that would content him.”

63:3 – “Your lovingkindness is better than life” – To dwell with God is better than life at its best.

63:5 – “My soul shall be satisfied” – This is really what we are all trying to find.

- “my mouth shall praise you” – David could praise God in the wilderness.

63:4 – “lift up my hands to Your name” – David is surrendering to God in the desert times.

- “Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” (1 Tim. 2:8)

63:6 – “on my bed” – David is sleeping on dirt in the wilderness.

- “I will meditate on You” – David is seeking to hear from God.

63:7 – “You have been my help” – God’s past faithfulness to us is an indication of His future faithfulness to us.

63:8 – “My soul follows close” – Desperate times produce desperate prayers.

- You can only know distance once you have experienced closeness.
- “close behind You” – Not earth nor heaven merely is the object of pursuit, but God Himself.

Chapter 64:

Psalm 64 – “Psalm of Slander.” The opposition of the tongue.

64:1 – “Hear my voice, O God” – Note how constantly David turns to prayer.

- “Preserve my life from fear” – David previously asked God to deliver him from the enemy; now he asks to be preserved from the fear of the enemy.
- “The fear of man brings a snare.” (Prov. 29:25)

64:3 – “sharpen” – (KJV “whet”) To whet or sharpen is performed by reiterated motion or friction.

- “their tongue” – The damage of a slanderous tongue is also an indication of the power of the spoken word. (James 2)
- “Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed.” (Prov. 27:5)
- “shoot their arrows” – Satan targets the believer with “fiery darts.” (Eph. 6:16)
- “bitter words” – God will turn the slander of the enemies against them. (v. 8)
- Ahithophel would commit suicide as a result of his bitterness towards David.

64:4 – “shoot in secret” – Satan lurks in the darkness.

- Their weapons of innuendo, shrug, and whisper appear to be as insignificant as needles, but the venom which they instill is deadly to many a reputation.
- “shoot in secret at the blameless” – Sincere and upright conduct will not secure us from the assaults of slander. The devil shot at our Lord Himself, and we may rest assured he has a fiery dart reserved for us.

64:5 – “Who will see them?” – They think they are getting away with it.

64:7 – “But God” – God will turn all the plans of the enemies on them.

64:9 – “declare the work of God” – So strange, so pointed, so terrible shall be the Lord’s overthrow of the malicious, that it shall be spoken of in all companies.

64:10 – “in heart” – This is where God is looking.

Chapter 65:

Psalm 65 – “Psalm of the Blessing of the Kingdom Age.”

- Outline: v. 1-4 – God’s grace, v. 5-8 – God’s greatness, and v. 9-13 – God’s goodness.

65:1 – “Praise is awaiting You, O God, in Zion” – This is a prophetic look to the Kingdom Age.

- We shall continue to wait on, tuning our harps, amid the tears of earth.

65:2 – “You who hear prayer” – God not only has heard, but is now hearing prayer.

- David evidently believed in a personal God and did not adore a mere idea or abstraction.
- “To You all flesh will come” – Everyone must give an account of their lives before God.
- “At the name of Jesus every knee should bow.” (Phil. 2:10)

65:3 – “You will provide atonement for them” – The bulk of the work is in making a way for us to be in a right relationship with God. (Setting up the kingdom is easy in comparison.)

- Iniquities that prevail against us do not prevail against God.

65:4 – “dwell in Your courts” – David loves God’s presence.

- “For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand.” (Ps. 84:10)
- “satisfied with the goodness of Your house” – God made His goodness pass before Moses. (Exod. 33:19)
- “satisfied” – One of the great blessings of being a believer is godly contentment whether we abase or abound. (1 Tim. 6:6; Phil. 4:12)

65:5 – “awesome deeds in righteousness” – It is a terrible, an awesome, thing for God to be crucified.

65:6 – “established the mountains by His strength” – If He can save us and atone for our sins, then He can hold this world together as well.

- Let a moment’s failure of His power, of His watchfulness, or of His will to do good, occur, and what a sweep of death and annihilation through the universe.
- Without Him, the everlasting hills would crumble; how much more shall all our plans, projects, and labors come to decay.

65:9 – “river of God” – Ezekiel 47 speaks of the river of God that will bring life to the whole world.

65:11 – “drip with abundance” – God’s blessing.

- David is looking to the Kingdom Age and the fulfillment of all of God’s promises to him.

Chapter 66:

Psalm 66 – This psalm was possibly written by Hezekiah upon the occasion of God’s deliverance of Israel from the Assyrians in 2 Kings 19.

66:3 – “Say to God” – Devotion, unless it be resolutely directed to the Lord, is no better than whistling to the wind.

66:5 – “the works of God” – The author now turns his attention to God’s work with the people of God.

66:6 – “the sea” – The Red Sea.

66:7 – “He rules” – Present tense.

66:8 – “make the voice of His praise to be heard” – They are not fearing, but boldly proclaiming.

66:9 – “not allow our feet to be moved” – He won’t permit it.

66:10 – “as silver is refined” – To assay silver requires great personal care in the operator and a carefully constructed furnace.

66:11 – “laid affliction on our backs” – This is the chastening of the Lord.

- The time will come when, for every ounce of present burden, we shall receive a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

66:12 – “through fire and through water” – The fires of the brick-kiln and the waters of the Nile did their worst to destroy the chosen race.

- “But You” – This is the hinge point of the trial.
- “a rich fulfillment” – Lit. “to an overflowing.” They were brought out of a situation of distress into a situation of overflowing well-being.

66:13 – “I” – The psalm gets personal at this point.

- “burnt offerings” – Offerings of consecration.
- “I will pay You my vows” – The psalmist made vows to God while in difficulty.

66:14 – “when I was in trouble” – All men have trouble, but they act not in the same manner while under it.

- 66:15 – “burnt sacrifices of fat animals” – The sacrifice of an innocent substitute.
- Never attempt to come before God without Jesus, the divinely promised, given, and accepted burnt offering.
 - “fat animals” – The good man will give his best things to God.

- 66:18 – “regard” – The idea is “favor, give place to, or cherish.” They regard iniquity in the heart who entertain and indulge the desire of sin.
- “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God.” (Isa. 59:1-2)
 - “my heart” – “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matt. 12:34)
 - “The Lord will not hear” – Nothing hinders prayer like iniquity harbored in the heart.
 - For God to accept our devotions while we are delighting in sin would be to make Himself the God of hypocrites.

66:19 – “attended to the voice of my prayer” – God has responded to his prayers despite his mistakes and the need for sacrifice.

Chapter 67:

Psalm 67 – “A Psalm of the Coming Kingdom.”

- 67:1 – “His face to shine upon us” – His smile grants the sense of His pleasure and favor.
- Similar to the Aaronic blessing of Num. 6:24-26.
 - “us...us...us” – This is a corporate prayer.

- 67:2 – “Your way” – That is, Your will, Your word, and Your works.
- “Your salvation among all nations” – God’s blessing of His people is to be a testimony to those who are not His people.

- 67:4 – “the nations be glad” – Nations never will be glad till they follow the leadership of the great Shepherd.
- “govern the nations” – Isa. 2:4; 11:9 speaks of the Messiah governing so that the people beat their swords into plowshares.
 - The world craves and will crave more and more for righteous government.

67:6 – “our own God” – We never love God aright until we know Him to be ours.

67:7 – “God shall bless us” – Godly prosperity. (Micah 4:4; Zech. 3:10)

Chapter 68:

Psalm 68 – “The War-Cry Psalm.” This psalm portrays the Lord as a mighty conqueror.

- 68:1 – “Let God arise” – Similar to the prayers of Israel in their travels. (Num. 10:35-36)
- Before we move, we should always desire to see the Lord lead the way.
 - “His enemies” – This psalm seems to be spoken at a time of difficulty.
 - “flee before Him” – The key to spiritual warfare is to be tucked directly behind Jesus.
 - The words of this psalm contain a prayer for the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Never shall the honor of Christ be complete, nor His people happy, nor the righteous be glad and rejoice exceedingly, until God arise and his enemies be scattered.

- 68:2 – “As wax” – It is hard when by itself, but put it to the fire, how soft it is.
- “the wicked perish at the presence of God” – Too often I, like the psalmist, have been envious when the wicked were in prosperity.
- 68:5 – “fatherless...widows” – Israel’s army would be fighting to defend these people.
- “father of the fatherless” – The only perfect father is the heavenly One. And God takes those who have missed out to some degree on this earth. God can fill all voids.
 - “defender of widows” – God has a special place in His heart for orphans and widows. (James 1:27)
- 68:6 – “God sets the solitary in families” – God does that as we surrender to Him. Marriage, children, church, friends, etc. are best found when not trying to find it.
- “There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time...and in the age to come, eternal life.” (Mark 10:29-30)
 - God unifies the dissimilar.
 - “the rebellious dwell in a dry land” – Even when they look to be prospering.
- 68:8 – “Sinai itself was moved” – All 2-3 million people heard the audible voice of God at the giving of the law. (Exod. 19:18)
- Heaven itself came down at Sinai.
- 68:10 – “the poor” – All are poor in themselves.
- 68:11 – “The Lord gave the word” – The great weapon of the believer.
- “the company” – The Hebrew for this word can also be translated “army.”
- 68:13 – “you lie down among the sheepfolds” – From the lowest condition the Lord would lift up His people into joy, liberty, wealth, and beauty.
- Thus a believer, who leaves behind him the corruptions of the world, and is rendered bright by the Sun of Righteousness shining upon his soul, rises higher and higher, nearer and nearer to the light, till, lost to the view of those who stay behind, he passed into the unknown brightness above.
- 68:14 – “white as snow in Zalmon” – The description of the enemy fleeing and discarding shields and weapons.
- 68:16 – “the mountain which God desires” – Jerusalem.
- 68:17 – “The chariots of God” – Elisha and his servant saw the chariots of God surrounding the Syrians. (2 Kings 6:17)
- 68:18 – “You have ascended on high” – This speaks of the Messiah.
- “led captivity captive” – It doesn’t say that the Messiah took captives, but that he took captivity itself captive. Jesus puts death to death, entombs the grave, and leads captivity captive.
 - “received gifts among men” – This Hebrew phrase may be rendered either, “You have received gifts in the human nature,” or “You have received gifts for the sake of men.” And it may be that both are true. (Eph. 1:3 – “every spiritual blessing”)
 - Paul quotes this verse in Eph. 4:8.

- 68:19 – “daily loads us with benefits” – “His compassions fail not. They are new every morning.”
(Lam. 3:22-23)
- 68:21 – “The hairy scalp” – This speaks of youth and virility.
- This may be a reference to Absalom and his hairy head.
- 68:23 – “dogs may have their portion” – We also desire the utter and crushing defeat of all evil.
- 68:24 – “Your procession” – This either speaks of the victory parade back into the city or the ascent to worship on the feast days.
- 68:27 – “little Benjamin, their leader” – This may refer to King Saul being from the tribe of Benjamin.
- 68:28 – “God has commanded your strength” – It is not merely a recommendation.
- God is mighty and He gives some of that strength to His people.
- “your strength” – Your strength is your best – all that is within You; all that you can do, and be, and become.
- “Strengthen, O God, what You have done for us” – We expect God to bless His own work. He has never left any work unfinished yet, and He never will.
- 68:29 – “Your temple at Jerusalem, Kings will bring presents to You” – Zech. 14 speaks of the people worshipping the king in Jerusalem.
- 68:31 – “Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God” – hasten, O Lord, this day, when both the civilization and the barbarism of the earth shall adore You.
- 68:32 – “kingdoms” – Plural.
- 68:33 – “He sends out His voice” – “He will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zeph. 3:17)
- “a mighty voice” – A voice of strength and power.
- 68:34 – “Ascribe strength to god” – Let us never by our doubts or our daring defiance appear to deny power unto God. On the contrary, by surrendering to Him and trusting in Him, let our hearts acknowledge His might.

Chapter 69:

Psalm 69 – “The Psalm of the Sufferer.”

- This is a Messianic psalm. Jesus was a “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (Isa. 53:3)
 - This is second only to Psalm 22 for number of quotations in the NT.
 - “The Lilies” – This either refers to a certain melody or denotes it to be a psalm sung at a spring festival.
 - “of David” – David’s authorship has been argued by some, but Paul quotes David from Psalm 69:21-22 in Romans 11:9-10.
 - David is walking in the “fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil. 3:10) being “conformed into the image of His Son” (Rom. 8:29).
- 69:2 – “deep mire” – Sin is as mire for its filthiness. Just watch people who are stuck in it.
- Our Lord was no faith-hearted sentimentalist; His were real woes, and though He bore them heroically, yet they were terrible even to Him.
 - “deep waters” – This is how David describes his difficult situations.
 - Drowning was a means of executing those who would not align themselves with the non-Biblical teachings of the church during the Dark Ages and Inquisition.
- 69:4 – “hate me without a cause” – Jesus quotes this in reference to Himself in John 15:25.
- “restore it” – David is taking the initiative to make all wrongs right.
 - In reference to our Lord, it may be truly said that He restores what He took not away.
 - Usually, when a ruler sins, the people suffer, but here the proverb is reversed.
- 69:5 – “my sins” – David acknowledges his sins and imperfections, but his sin is against God and not against those who are getting after David.
- 69:6 – “Let not those who seek You be confounded because of me” – This is often a result of a godly leader’s fall. A leader’s failure can stumble many.
- 69:7 – “reproach” – This word is used 6 times in this psalm. (v. 7, 9, 10, 19, 20)
- “Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” (Luke 6:26)
- 69:8 – “stranger to my brothers” – Jesus’ step-brothers and mother rejected Him for a time. (John 7:5)
- The Jews, His brethren in race, rejected Him. His family, His brethren by blood, were offended at Him. His disciples, His brethren in spirit, forsook Him and fled.
- 69:9 – “zeal for Your house has eaten me up” – Quoted by the disciples of Jesus in John 2:17.
- Jesus said that the religious leaders were making His Father’s house an abomination. The people were beginning to despise religion and the things of God due to the religious leaders’ representation of God.
 - How industrious was Calvin in the Lord’s vineyard! When his friends persuaded him for his health’s sake to remit a little of his labor, he said, “Would you have the Lord find me idle when He comes?” Luther spent three hours a day in prayer. It is said of holy Bradford, preaching, reading, and prayer, was his whole life. “I rejoice,” said bishop Jewel, “that my body is exhausted in the labors of my holy calling.” “Let racks, fires, pullies, and all manner of torments come, so I may win Christ,” said Ignatius.
 - “reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me” – Quoted of Jesus in Romans 15:3.

- 69:10 – “I wept” – As Jesus did on His way into Jerusalem. (Luke 19:41)
 - “my reproach” – They are reproaching his zeal and sacrifice for the Lord.
 - Behold here, virtue is accounted, vice; truth, blasphemy; wisdom, folly.
- 69:12 – “Those who sit in the gate speak against me” – The leaders are gossiping against David.
- 69:14-15 – “mire...deep waters...floodwaters...deep” – Repeated from v. 2-3.
- 69:17 – “do not hide Your face” – Jesus would cry, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”
 (Matt. 27:46)
- 69:18 – “Draw near to my soul” – The mid-point and turning point of the psalm.
 - The hear approach of God is all the sufferer needs. One smile will still the rage of hell.
- 69:20 – “broken my heart” – The water and blood from Christ’s side were signs of a broken heart.
 (John 19:34)
- 69:21 – “gave me gall for my food” – As they did to Jesus on the cross in Matthew 27:34.
- 69:21-22 – Quoted by Paul in Romans 11:9-10 in reference to those refusing to accept Jesus Christ.
- 69:24 – “Pour out Your indignation” – The general doctrine of providential retribution, far from being confined to the Old Testament, is distinctly taught in many of our Savior’s parables.
 (1 Thess. 2:16)
- 69:25 – “dwelling place be desolate” – Peter quotes a variation of this verse in Acts 1:20.
- 69:27 – “let them not come into Your righteousness” – Those who choose evil shall have their choice.
- 69:29 – “set me up on high” – Even now we are “raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:6)
- 69:31 – “please the Lord better than an ox or bull” – “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” (Heb. 10:4)
- 69:35 – “God will save Zion” – It seems that this hasn’t been ultimately fulfilled yet.

Chapter 70:

Psalm 70 – Prayer for God to “come quickly.”

- “bring to remembrance” – Largely repeated from Psalm 40:13-17.

70:1 – “Make haste” – God is never late.

70:4 – “seek You” – This stands in contrast to those seeking David’s life.

70:5 – “Make haste to me” – This is 1 out of 6.5 billion people on earth.

- “my deliverer” – David recognizes his need to be delivered by the Lord.

Chapter 71:

Psalm 71 – “The Psalm for the Old Age.” (v. 9, 18)

- The Septuagint ascribes this psalm to David.
- “Even to your old age, I am He, and even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.” (Isa. 46:4)

71:1 – “never be put to shame” – Confusion escalates when we try to do things on our own.

- The more I see of people, the more confused I become.

71:3 – “To which I may resort continually” – Even to an old age.

71:4 – “cruel man” – He is literally “the leavened man.” (1 Cor. 5:8)

71:5 – “You are my hope” – “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27)

- “You are my trust from my youth” – He has a history with God’s faithfulness.

71:7 – “a wonder to many” – David didn’t forget how and by whom he got to where he was.

71:10 – “my enemies” – The psalmist has enemies, even in his old age.

- David had to put down the coup of Adonijah and Abiathar as his final act as king. (1 Kings 1)
- Sometimes, the greatest battles are fought just before the war is over.

71:11 – “Saying, ‘God has forsaken him’” – The harshest persecution is that which makes us doubt our God.

71:14 – “hope continually” – Relationship with God is an unfailing hope.

- “praise You yet more and more” – There doesn’t need to be a decline in spiritual life as one ages.
- There is a great beauty in an older saint who praises the Lord. And there are few things sadder than an older saint trying to hold onto this life and not being able to testify of God in it.
- We are “being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3:18)

71:18 – “Until I declare Your strength to this generation” – David “served his own generation by the will of God.” (Acts 13:36)

- “They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing.” (Ps. 92:14)

71:20 – “bring me up again” – Looking to his resurrection.

Chapter 72:

Ps. 72 – “of Solomon” – The reign of Solomon is a type of the reign of the Messiah.

72:1 – “righteousness” – Solomon asked for wisdom “to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.” (1 Kings 3:9)

72:3 – “The mountains will bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness” – The Church’s work is a work of righteousness in the heart. All social solutions for peace can only come out of a peaceful heart.

72:5 – “As long as the sun and moon endure” – This is looking to the future, Messiah, and Kingdom Age to come.

- “throughout all generations” – Each generation shall have a regeneration in its midst.

72:6 – “like rain upon the grass” – Refreshing.

- Christ-less souls are like the dry ground.
- “Like showers that water the earth” – This is similar to 2 Sam. 23:4.
- Some believe David actually wrote Psalm 72 for his son, Solomon.

72:8 – “He shall have dominion” – The peace and prosperity of the kingdom are the result of the righteous rule of Jesus on this earth.

- The Savior’s universal reign; in this psalm, at least, we see a personal monarch, and He is the central figure, the focus of all the glory; not His servant, but Himself do we see possessing the dominion and dispensing the government. Personal pronouns referring to our great King are constantly occurring in this psalm; He has dominion, kings fall before Him, and serve Him; for He delivers, He spares, He saves, He lives, and daily He is praised.
- Social reform will only be meaningful after spiritual rebirth; for if the heart is corrupted, it will only be a matter of time until that manifests itself regardless of the social system.

72:7 – “until the moon is no more” – The reign of Jesus to the end of the Millennium and the burning up of all things. (2 Pet. 3:10)

72:10 – “Tarshish” – The end of the known world at that time. Possibly Britain.

- “Seba” – North Africa.

72:13 – “spare the poor and needy” – God has a great concern for the poor, and for all human life.

- The proverb says, “God helps those that help themselves,” but it is yet more true that Jesus helps those who cannot help themselves nor find help in others.

72:14 – “redeem” – This word is used for the “kinsman-redeemer.”

72:15 – “the gold of Sheba” – Solomon received of the finest gold of his time.

72:18-19 – “Blessed be the Lord” – These verses call rather for profound gratitude and emotion of heart than for an exercise of the understanding. They are rather to be used for adoration than for exposition.

72:19 – “the whole earth be filled with His glory” – This is a prophetic statement.

72:20 – “David the son of Jesse” – He sees himself not as David the king or David the giant killer, but as the son of a good man.

Chapter 73:

Ps. 73 – “of Asaph” – Asaph is called a seer in 2 Chron. 29:30.

- Asaph may be physically ill at the time of this writing. (v. 26)

73:1 – “Truly God is good” – The Amplified Bible says “Only God is good” and that is the heart of this psalm.

- “God is good” – The basic, starting point of understanding that we need to remember at all stages of life. Notwithstanding the variety and frequency of the saint’s sufferings, yet God is good.
 - This premise will be challenged by the things he sees of this life and the prosperity of the wicked.
 - If I cannot understand You, let me never cease to believe in You.

73:2 – “my feet had almost stumbled” – Asaph is mentioning a dilemma that nearly caused him to give up on something that he previously held onto.

- When confronted with something we don’t understand, we must fall back on what we already know to be true.
- Let such as fear God and begin to look aside on the things of this world know it will be hard even for them to hold out in faith and in the fear of God in time of trial.
- “steps had nearly slipped” – There is an intimate connection between his heart and the feet. When men doubt the righteousness of God, their own integrity begins to waver.

73:3 – “I saw the prosperity” – “Those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise.” (2 Cor. 10:12)

- “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.” (1 Tim. 6:9)
- “How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God.” (Mark 10:24)
- “the prosperity of the wicked” – The problem: Why do the wicked prosper?
 - The psalm functions in sheer honesty, saying what we have all thought at some time.
- “wicked” – We are all wicked apart from the work of Christ on our behalf.

73:5 – “not in trouble” – This isn’t true. His perspective is skewed.

- Asaph, the seer, has lost vision.
- It may be that God has given them over to the desires and sin of their own hearts.

73:6 – “Therefore, pride” – Their apparent prosperity has led them to pride and violence.

73:11 – “How does God know?” – They are mocking the things of God.

73:12 – “riches” – or “strength.” Both wealth and health are their dowry.

73:13 – “in vain” – It seems to him that he has done the right thing for nothing.

- The prosperity of the wicked is never to be taken as an encouragement to commit sin.
- Distorted facts yield to false conclusions.
- “washed my hands” – Asaph had been as careful of his hands as of his heart; he had guarded his outer as well as his inner life.

73:14 – “chastened every morning” – The way to heaven is an afflicted way.

73:16 – “too painful” – This is causing him tremendous turmoil.

73:17 – “Until I went into the sanctuary of God” – The turning point of this psalm.

- This is an act of God’s grace, to give us clarity and vision as we pass through life.
- “their end” – He gets eternity in view and it changes his perspective.
- We must always judge the temporal based on the eternal.
- It is better to be a poor man in heaven than a rich man in hell.

73:18-19 – Text for Jonathan Edwards’ sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

73:18 – “destruction” – Eternal punishment will be all the more terrible in contrast with the former prosperity of those who are ripening for it.

73:21 – “my heart was grieved” – Asaph has been convicted.

73:22 – “I was like a beast” – He permitted his mind to be wholly occupied with sensible things, like the beasts that perish, and did not look into a future state, nor did he consider nor submit to the wise designs of an unerring providence.

- “beast” – Lit. “behemoth.”

73:23 – “I am continually with You” – No prosperity compares with the presence of God.

- He does not give up his faith, though he confesses his folly.

73:24 – “afterward receive me to glory” – And the promise of heaven.

73:25 – “Whom have I in heaven but you?” – How small is the number of those who keep their affections fixed on God alone! We see how superstition joins to him many others as rivals for our affections.

- The Bride seeks her Beloved in all places, objects, and events. If she finds Him, who is happier? If she find Him not, who more disconsolate?

73:26 – “God is the strength of my heart” – This is true despite the difficult time and questioning he has been going through.

73:28 – “draw near” – It is not a single act; it is the drawing, the coming, the habitual walk, going on and on, so long as we are on earth.

- “draw near to God” – This is better than the prosperity of the wicked.

Chapter 74:

Psalm 74 – “A Psalm of Destruction.”

- Possibly looking to the Babylonian captivity of Jerusalem or to the persecution of Antiochus in 168 BC (as no sin is mentioned in this psalm).
- When the fiery trial befalls us, no strange things have happening unto us, we are following the trail of the host of God.
- “Contemplation” – (Heb. “Maschil”) The idea is “instruction.”
- “Asaph” – This may either be Asaph or those of Asaph’s lineage who were serving in his position.

74:1 – “O God” – He starts with a prayer.

- “sheep” – There is nothing more imbecile than a sheep.

74:3 – “Lift up Your feet” – This phrase implies punishment. One translator has it as “Tread hard upon Thine enemies.”

74:4 – “banners for signs” – The enemy has set up his banners in victory over the city.

74:6 – “break down its carved work” – They destroyed the beautiful craftsmanship of the Temple. (1 Kings 6:15)

74:8 – “the meeting places” – (KJV “synagogues”) There were no synagogues until after the Jews returned to their land following the captivity of Babylon.

74:10 – “how long” – If this refers to the Babylonian captivity, Jeremiah will tell them it will last 70 years. (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10)

74:11 – “Take it out of Your bosom” – It seems like God is inactive with His hands in His pockets.

74:12 – “my King from of old” – It is not that God is not capable of any deliverance.

- “The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God.” (Isa. 59:1-2)

74:20 – “the covenant” – He is recalling the promises of God.

74:22 – “Remember” – It is not that God can forget, but he is calling God to act.

Chapter 75:

Psalm 75 – “A Psalm Against Threatenings.”

- This is possibly looking at the Assyrians’ threat to destroy Jerusalem. (2 Kings 18-19; Isaiah 36-37)
- This psalm may be sung in times of great depression. It is a song of the second advent, “Concerning the Nearness of the Judge with the Cup of Wrath.”

75:1 – “Your name is near” – We sing not of a hidden God who sleeps and leaves the Church to her fate, but of One who ever in our darkest days is most near, a very present help in trouble.

75:2 – “I will judge uprightly” – This is spoken by God Himself.

75:3 – “I set up its pillars firmly” – God has established this world and maintains it to accomplish His purposes.

75:4 – “boastful” – The ungodly are spiritual fools.

75:5 – “horn” – A symbol of strength and authority.

- “Do not speak with a stiff neck” – Pride and stubbornness before God is madness.

75:6 – “exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west” – This shows the folly of self-promotion.

- Men forget that all things are ordained in heaven.

75:7 – “God is the judge” – Even now, He is actually judging.

- “puts down one, and exalts another” – “The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” (Dan. 4:25)

75:8 – “a cup” – “The wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation.” (Rev. 14:10)

- The judgments of God upon sinners are “the cup of the Lord’s right hand.” (Hab. 2:16)

- In Gethsemane, Jesus asked for the cup to be taken from Him. (Matt. 26:39,42; John 18:11)

- “Drain and drink down” – Even to the bitter end must wrath proceed. They will drink on and on forever.

75:9 – “God of Jacob” – (Also in 76:6.) God’s deliverance is not a response to Israel’s goodness or perfection in duty.

75:10 – “the righteous shall be exalted” – This stands in contrast to the others who are exalting themselves.

Chapter 76:

Psalm 76 – Similar theme to Psalm 75, possibly dealing with God’s destruction of Assyria. (2 Kings 18-19; Isaiah 36-37)

76:1 – “In Judah God is known” – After a miraculous deliverance, it is only proper to praise the Lord.

- “His name is great in Israel” – The world knows Him not, and therefore blasphemes Him, but His church is full of ardor to proclaim His fame unto the ends of the earth.

76:2 – “Salem” – Jerusalem has a special place in the heart of God.

76:6 – “cast into a deep sleep” – 185,000 Assyrians were killed by one angel in one night.

76:7 – “You, Yourself, are to be feared” – God, and God alone, is to be feared.

- The fear of man is a snare, but the fear of God is a great virtue and has great power for good over the human mind.

- “The fear of the Lord is clean.” (Ps. 19:9) Proper reverence will affect how we live.

- “No one can know the true grace of God who has not first known the fear of God” – A.W. Tozer.

76:10 – “the wrath of man shall praise You” – The Septuagint translates this, “The wrath of man shall keep holy day to Thee, shall increase a festival for Thee.”

- Let men and devils rage as they may; they cannot do otherwise than subserve the divine purposes.
- All things will work together for His glory. God is just in judgment. The verse clearly teaches that even the most rampant evil is under the control of the Lord, and will in the end be overruled for His praise.
- “gird yourself” – God will take it to Himself.

76:11 – “Make vows...and pay them” – “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’”
(Matt. 5:37)

Chapter 77:

Psalm 77 – “A Psalm of God’s Delay.”

- This psalm is similar to Psalm 73.

77:1 – “I cried” – Asaph did not run to man but to the Lord, and to Him he went, not with studied, stately, stilted words, but with a cry.

- In the beginning of the psalm, before speaking of his sorrows, he hastens to show the necessary and most efficacious remedy for allaying sorrow.

77:2 – “In...my trouble I sought the Lord” – Desperate times produce desperate prayers.

- He doesn’t understand why God is so slow in coming to his aid.
- Abraham, Moses, David, Mary and Martha, Jeremiah and others sought God in great difficulty.
- “I sought the Lord” – We must seek Him, and seek till we find Him. In the day of his trouble, he did not seek for the diversions of business recreation to shake off his trouble that way, but he sought God, and His favor, and grace.
- “in the night without ceasing” – He cannot sleep because of the difficulty.
- There is no release despite the passionate plea. It may feel like he is abandoned by God.

77:3 – “I remembered God, and was troubled” – God’s past faithfulness can be our sustenance to get us through difficult times (v. 10-11), but God’s past faithfulness can also give us just enough hope to really hurt in times when we don’t see it working out for us.

77:4 – “I am so troubled that I cannot speak” – Sometimes our grief is so violent that it finds no vent.
(Rom. 8:26)

77:6 – “diligent search” – It is our duty to search for comfort, and not in sullen indolence yield to despair.

- He did not cease seeking God for introspection.

77:7-9 – Asaph asks 6 rhetorical questions.

- The author is asking these questions regarding the nation of Israel, the promised people of God.

77:10 – “This is my anguish” – This may be understood to mean, “This is my appointed sorrow, and I will bear it without complaint.”

- The problem is with the author, not with God.
- “remember the years...of the Most High” – The momentary trouble has cancelled out the many years of God’s faithfulness to him.
- There are seasons when even the holiest faith cannot bear to listen to words of reasoning; though it can still find support whereon to rest, in the simple contemplation, in all their native grandeur, of the deeds that God hath wrought.

77:11 – “the works of the Lord...your wonders” – All God’s works are wonders.

- I want to see God do what only God can do.

77:12 – “Your deeds” – The focus of the psalm transitions from “I/my” to “You/Yours.”

- He is choosing to talk about God rather than focusing on how he feels.

77:13,19 – “Your way” – He can see God in the sanctuary and in the sea.

77:13 – “in the sanctuary” – They saw something of the heart of God in the sanctuary.

77:16 – “the waters” – Speaking of the Israel’s deliverance from Egypt through the Red Sea.

- “the waters saw You” – The waters saw You, but men do not see You. The depths were troubled, but men say in their heart, “There is no God.”

77:19 – “Your way was in the sea” – The truth of God’s way as it is revealed in the sanctuary is consistent with how God will reveal Himself in the sea.

Chapter 78:

Psalm 78 – “Contemplation” – (Heb. “maschil”) Lit. “instruction.”

78:1 – “Give ear” – Listening entails both hearing and obeying.

- Men lend their ears to music, how much more should they listen to the gospel?

78:3 – “fathers have told us” – So much of God’s work in Israel’s history was passed from fathers to children.

- Fathers have the primary impact on their children.
- The generation following us is in desperate need of clarity.

78:4 – “Showing to the generation to come” – If you have children, mind you do not fail in this duty.

- Parents are to walk it and talk it with their children.

78:7 – “hope in God” – These examples of God’s works and the people’s failure are given to excite their hope in God alone.

- In this psalm, hoping in God is defined by believing and obeying His word.
- This is what God wants from them.

78:8 – “fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation” – Fathers stubborn in their own way, and rebellious against God’s way, are sorry examples for their children.

- 78:9 – “Ephraim...turned back in the day of battle” – This seems to be a reference to Israel’s refusal to enter the promised land at Kadesh Barnea. (Num. 14)
- Israel’s lack of strength and victory has always resulted from leaving off God’s commands.
- 78:12 – “Marvelous things He did...in the land of Egypt” – The psalmist recounts God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt.
- The remembrance of our salvation will impact how we currently live.
- 78:14 – “all the night” – His care is so constant.
- That cloud which was a shade by day was as a sun by night.
- 78:16 – “streams out of the rock” – God can provide streams in the wilderness.
- “waters to run down like rivers” – The second murmuring for water at Kadesh seems to have been a more aggravated act of rebellion than the former, and yet the water is given in greater abundance.
- 78:17 – “they sinned even more” – After all God has done for them, they are sinning against light.
- 78:18 – “they tested God” – They tested God by minimizing His provision and asking for “more.” They are going against His plan.
- The sinners in the wilderness would have had the Lord change His wise proceedings to humor their whims.
 - Growing discontent with God’s grace and provision is moving away from God. Nothing is more provoking to God than our quarreling with our allotment, and indulging the desires of the flesh.
- 78:19 – “Can God furnish?” – It was not a sin to be hungry and thirsty.
- 78:20 – “Can He provide meat?” – Kibroth Hattaavah. (Num. 11)
- They wanted meat like they had in Egypt.
- 78:22 – “they did not believe in God” – The sin of unbelief is the root of all other sins. In the text, it appears as if all Israel’s other sins were as nothing compared with this.
- This is why God was furious with them.
 - “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” (John 6:29)
- 78:25 – “angels’ food” – What was good enough for the angels was not good enough for them.
- 78:29 – “gave them their own desire” – Sometimes God must give us over to our sinful desires to cure us of it altogether.
- 78:30 – “craving” – Lusts can never be satisfied.
- 78:31 – “slew the stoutest of them” – They ate quail “until it comes out of your nostrils.” (Num. 11:20)
- They who make “a god of their belly, their end is destruction.” (Phil. 3:19)
- 78:32 – “In spite of this they still sinned, and did not believe” – Their failure to believe is not due to a lack of evidence, but the lack of the right disposition that keeps men from believing God.
- In Matt. 28, they saw the resurrected Christ and still doubted.

- 78:33 – “consumed in futility” – Their lives were spent in the wilderness, bearing no fruit, and failing to ever experience the life of the promised land.
- They lived empty lives.
- 78:34 – “then they sought Him” – While thousands died around them, the people of Israel become suddenly religious.
- 78:36 – “flattered Him with their mouths” – Hypocrisy. They made great shows of repentance and turning to God, but they meant no such thing. (Matt. 15:8-9)
- 78:39 – “does not come again” – This is not reincarnation.
- “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.” (Heb. 9:27)
- 78:41 – “limited the Holy One of Israel” – An all-powerful God limited by His creation.
- Not allowing God to work in or have possession of some area of our life.
- Some impose dispensational limitations upon God, saying He cannot do something that He does in our day.
- 78:43 – “His signs in Egypt” – A more thorough account of God’s deliverance from Egypt.
- 78:44 – “rivers to blood” – Moses wrought wonders destructive, Christ wonders preservative. Moses turned water into blood, Christ water into wine.
- “blood” – Now the Egyptians, and especially their priest, were particularly nice and delicate in their outward habit and rites, and there was nothing which they abhorred more than blood, and they seldom admitted any bloody sacrifices.
- 78:49 – “sending evil angels” – The perfect justice of God doth use well even evil things.
- 78:52 – “like a flock” – That means God is the shepherd.
- 78:55 – “He also drove out the nations before them” – He gave them the promised land through Joshua.
- 78:56 – “did not keep his testimonies” – They did not follow His Commandments.
- How quickly we turn from His words!
- 78:57 – “unfaithfully like their fathers” – Human nature does not improve.
- “turned aside like a deceitful bow” – A false heart betrays itself before it is aware, when given the opportunity.
- 78:58 – “their carved images” – They prefer to give reverence to something tangible and visible over something spiritual and eternal.
- 78:60 – “tabernacle of Shiloh” – The initial resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. (Josh. 18:1)

- 78:61 – “His glory into the enemy’s hand” – The Philistines took the Ark. (1 Sam. 4)
- This is worse than limiting God; this is reducing His glory.
 - When God is gone, all is gone. No calamity can equal the withdrawal of the divine presence from a people.
 - When the ark has become as a stranger among Israelites, no marvel if it soon be made a prisoner among Philistines.
- 78:64 – “Their priests fell” – Hophni and Phinehas were killed when the ark was taken.
- The priesthood is no shelter for transgressors.
- 78:68 – “Mount Zion” – God moved the tabernacle from Shiloh in the north, to Jerusalem in Judah.
- 78:70 – “He chose David His servant” – In contrast to the faithlessness of the rest of Israel, David didn’t hinder or limit God, but trusted Him enough to let God move through Him.
- This is pointing, ultimately, to the great servant, Jesus Christ.
- 78:72 – “integrity...skillfulness” – For leaders, integrity of heart is more important than skill of hands.

Chapter 79:

Ps. 79 – This psalm is likely looking to the Babylonian invasion.

- If Asaph, the seer, is speaking prophetically, this psalm may be looking to the Roman invasion or maybe even further into the future (v. 3 would be true of Armageddon).
- 79:1 – “nations have come into Your inheritance” – The enemy has wrecked God’s people.
- 79:3 – “blood they have shed like water all around Jerusalem” – Josephus said in 70 AD blood flowed so deep in the streets that it came into the houses and put out their fires.
- 79:4 – “A scorn and derision” – Of all outward judgments, this is the sorest, to have strangers rule over us, as being made up of shame and cruelty.
- 79:6 – “wrath on the nations that do not know You” – This is similar to Habakkuk’s plea that God would not use a nation more evil than his own to punish Israel. (Hab. 1:12-16)
- 79:6-7 – These verses are repeated again in Jeremiah 10:25.
- 79:8 – “do not remember former iniquities against us” – In Josiah’s days, the most earnest repentance was not able to avert the doom which former long years of idolatry had sealed against Judah.
- 79:9 – “God of our salvation” – The faith of the prophet judges far otherwise of God and sees even in an angry and pursuing God the salvation of His people.
- “atonement for our sins” – Sin, the root of the evil, is seen and confessed.
 - “For Your name’s sake” – He is looking for God’s glory rather than their own.
 - He didn’t want their defeat to result in God being mocked.
- 79:10 – “Where is their God?” – Babylon would assume their god was greater than Israel’s God because they defeated Israel in battle.
- 79:11 – “the groaning of the prisoner” – That groan was a wish that he could be set free.

79:13 – “give You thanks forever” – He is expressing confidence in the goodness of God.

Chapter 80:

Ps. 80 – “lilies” – This psalm was likely sung in the Spring and looks to God’s restoration of the nation. (Ps. 45, 60, 69)

- Theme: “Restore us, O God.” (v. 3, 7, 19)

80:1 – “between the cherubim” – That is the mercy seat, the place of God’s manifest presence.

- The cherubim also appear around the throne of God in Rev. 4.

80:2 – “Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh” – These three tribes followed the Ark during Israel’s wilderness wanderings. (Num. 10:21-24)

80:3 – “Restore us, O God” – 3 times in this psalm.

- “O God” – The name of God intensifies as we progress through this psalm: v. 7, 14 – “O God of hosts” and v. 19 – “O Lord God of hosts.”
- “Cause Your face to shine” – The blessing of His smile. (Num. 6:25)
 - All that is wanted for salvation is the Lord’s favor; one glance of His gracious eye.
- “Your face” – He is asking for God Himself.

80:4 – “How long?” – Jeremiah would prophecy that the Babylonian deportation would last 70 years because the nation of Israel forsook her Sabbaths for 490 years. (Jer. 25:11)

- “angry against the prayer of Your people” – That God should be angry with us when sinning seems natural enough, but that He should be angry even with our prayers is a bitter grief.

80:7 – “Restore us” – The psalmist is looking for supernatural help. They are unable to do this on their own.

80:8 – “a vine” – A metaphor for the nation of Israel. (Isa. 5)

80:11 – “the Sea...to the River” – From the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River.

- The kingdom under David and Solomon grew to its zenith.

80:12 – “hedges” – The walls and hedgerows surrounding the vineyard.

- God’s boundaries in our lives are placed there for our protection.
- “You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places.” (Ps. 16:5-6)

80:14, 18, 19 – “Return...Revive...Restore.”

80:14 – “visit this vine” – Still it has roots; still some branches are living.

80:17 – “the man of Your right hand” – This says that Christ is the object of God’s warmest and most honorable regards. In Him He is well pleased, and in token of this, He has set Him in the most honorable place. He is the Son of Man, whom the Father made to stand strong for Himself.

- “the son of man” – This is the way Jesus most often referred to Himself.
 - The longing is ultimately for the Messiah.

80:19 – “And we shall be saved” – During distress, God comes; and when He comes, it is no more distress.

Chapter 81:

Ps. 81 – “of Gath” – The title implies “the psalm of winepress.” It may be referring to the Feast of Tabernacles which took place on the 1st day of the 7th month (our October).

- Theme: “The Blessing of Following God.”

81:1 – “a joyful shout” – Jehovah can only be adored with the heart, and that music is the best for His service which gives the heart most play.

81:4 – “a statute for Israel” – God is calling them to a celebration.

- We ask concerning every rite and rubric, “Is this a law of the God of Jacob?” and if it be not clearly so, it is of no authority with us who walk in Christian liberty.

81:6 – “I removed” – God is recalling His work.

81:7 – “Meribah” – means “striving.” (Num. 20:13) Yet, God watered the people anyway.

81:9 – “no foreign god” – Man is so desperate an idolater.

81:10 – “Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it” – The verse given to George Muller.

- “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matt. 6:33)
- Come to it then, and wait at it, till you obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- “I will fill” – God desires to bless.

81:12 – “gave them over” – One of the greatest curses of God is to give us over to our own desires. (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28)

- He never forces or incline the will to sin, but leaves it to the corrupt habits it has settled in itself. “The corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Pet. 1:4)
- Let it be your great and constant care and endeavor to get the Spirit’s leading continued to you.
- “their own counsels” – A nation first dies spiritually, then morally and ethically, and finally it dies physically and completely.
- “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Prov. 14:34)

81:13 – “that My people would listen to Me” – None are found in the ways of God but those who have hearkened to His words.

81:14 – “I would soon subdue their enemies” – God’s promised protection.

81:16 – “with honey from the rock” – Not just water, like at Meribah. (v. 7)

- “For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.” (1 Cor. 10:4)

Chapter 82:

Ps. 82 – Theme: “The justice of God against the injustice of man.”

82:1 – “He judges” – God stands in the position of greatest power. He is above all “gods.”

- “gods” – (Heb. “elohim”) Translated “judges” in Exod. 21:6; 22:8. (John 10:34)
 - The judges were to make determination on behalf of and in the will of God.
 - This does not support the cultic, satanic, or catholic teachings that elevate certain people of power to the place of gods.

82:2 – “judge unjustly” – Those in the judicial system that don’t practice justice.

- “show partiality” – God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34)
 - “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” (John 7:24)

82:3 – “Defend the poor and fatherless” – The responsibility of the judicial system is to look out for the less fortunate.

- “justice to the afflicted” – Our system seems to have shifted to a defense of the rights of the criminal over the rights of the victim.

82:5 – “do not know, nor do they understand” – Yet they are trying to make decisions.

- God has asked us to pray for those in authority over us. (1 Tim. 2:1; Rom. 13:1)
- “the foundations of the earth are unstable” – Could the USA stop the flow of heroin into the country without catastrophic economic consequences?

82:7 – “die like men” – Despite present power, all men are still but dust. God will one day judge all men.

- How quickly death unrobes the great. What an equalizer he is.
- The meditation of death would pull down the plumes of pride; you are but dust animated; shall dust and ashes be proud?

82:8 – “O God, judge the earth” – The psalmist is looking to the only perfectly just and true judge.

Chapter 83:

Psalm 83 – “Psalm for Combating Conspiracy.”

- Many refer this to 2 Chron. 20 when Moab and Ammon combine to attack Jehoshaphat.
- “of Asaph” – This is the last psalm of Asaph.

83:1 – “Do not keep silent” – In Scripture, there are three reasons why the Lord keeps silence.

1. The Lord does it to try their faith.
 2. He tries men’s uprightness, to see who will stick with God.
 3. That He may gather the wicked all into one bundle to destroy them all together.
- Is the Lord silent? Then you be not silent, but cry unto Him till He breaks the silence.

83:2 – “those who hate You” – They are not only persecuting the people of God, but also God Himself.

83:3 – “against Your people” – Their hatred of God manifests itself in animosity against His children.

83:5-8 – “confederacy” – A ten-nation alliance against Israel.

83:5 – “they have consulted together” – If only the Church worked as well together as its enemies do.

83:6 – “Edom...Moab” – These are the children of Lot.

- “Hagrites” – These may be the descendants of Abraham’s mistress, Hagar.

83:7 – “Gebal” – An important Phoenician city. (1 Kings 5:18; Ezek. 27:9)

83:9-12 – “Midian” – Referring to the battle of Gideon’s 300 men over the 135,000 men of Midian. (Judges 7-8)

- “Sisera...Jabin” – Referring to Deborah and Barak’s warfare from Judges 4.
 - Sisera was killed by Jael putting a tent stake through his head.

83:10 – “refuse on the earth” – The oily substance evolving as the bones calcines, makes better manure than almost any other substance – especially human bones.

83:11 – “Zebah and Zalmunna” – These were the captains of the Midianite army defeated by Gideon.

83:13 – “make them like whirling dust” – Jesus instructs the NT believer to “pray for those who spitefully use you.” (Luke 6:28)

83:17 – “confounded and dismayed forever” – That all their schemes and hopes are defeated, and their bodies and souls full of anguish without end.

83:18 – “Lord” – Lit. “Jehovah.” The Hebrew is so emphatic that the KJV transliterates this as Jehovah.

Chapter 84:

Psalm 84 – “Psalm of Pilgrimage.”

- The psalm contains three sections: desire (v. 1-4), journey (v. 5-8), and arrival (v. 9-12).
- “Korah” – Korah had attempted to usurp the authority of Moses (Num. 16). But the sons of Korah had later been assigned the task of guarding the entrance to the tabernacle (1 Chron. 9:19).

84:1 – “lovely is Your tabernacle” – Not because of any outward beauty. A tabernacle was a mean habitation, but the disadvantage of external circumstances makes holy ordinances not at all the less amiable.

- The tabernacle was the place of worship, sacrifice, and the Manifest Presence of God.

84:2 – “longs” – Lit. “to make pale.” This Hebrew word is translated “greedy” in other places.

- “faints” – Lit. “to be exhausted.”
- “My heart and my flesh” – Both the inner and outer man.
 - Jesus said “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6)
- “cry” – The Hebrew word notes a strong cry, or to cry as a child cries when it is sadly hungry. When a child cries, its hands cry, and face cries, and feet cries.

84:4 – “praising You” – Never reset satisfied with merely frequenting such places or with having certain privileges there, but rise in spirit and seek and find and enjoy direct communion with the living God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

84:5 – “strength is in You” – This is repentance, as opposed to self-sufficiency.
- “pilgrimage” – The reality he is looking for is not to be found on earth.
- Abraham was a man of the tent looking “for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb. 11:10)
- We are to live as “sojourners and pilgrims.” (1 Pet. 2:11)

84:6 – “pass through” – Not “get stuck in.”
- “Valley of Baca” – A dry, desert valley with underground aquifers.
- If we are willing to dig deep in the desert, we will find a secret water source.
- These pools of water would be left behind for future travelers after the pilgrim moved on.
- “Baca” – means “balsam trees” or “weeping.”

84:7 – “from strength to strength” – Because they have tapped into a spiritual source.
- God also gives “grace for grace” (John 1:16) so we can be “changed from glory to glory.” (2 Cor. 3:18).
- “Each one appears” – God will get each on there.

84:8 – “Jacob” – The heel-catcher, conniver, and manipulator.

84:10 – “rather be a doorkeeper” – Satisfaction in the Lord has freed them from ambition.
- It is better to be the poorest man in heaven than the richest man in hell.
- Another sign of God’s children is to delight to be much in God’s presence.

84:11 – “shield” – As He was to Abraham. (Gen. 15:1)
- “the Lord will give” – Where anything good comes from. (James 1:17)
- “grace and glory” – Grace comes now; glory comes later.
- “good thing” – And only God knows what is really good for us.
- “walk uprightly” – Not perfectly. Godly perfection is not a perfection of performance, but a perfection of relationship.

Chapter 85:

Ps. 85 – “Psalm of the Return of Captives.” It is a prayer of a patriot for his afflicted country.
- This psalm possibly refers to the era of Haggai and Zechariah.

85:1-3 – “You have” – 6 times in 3 verses.

85:1 – “favorable to Your land” – The people owed the land 70 sabbath years.

85:2 – “forgiven the iniquity of Your people” – Often has God done this.
- “iniquity” – Lit. “bent, twisted.”

85:4-7 – “Restore us” – The prayer acknowledges that the present troubles are indicative of God’s displeasure.

85:6 – “revive” – Lit. “restore to life.” This is for the believer who has lost some of the love they had at the beginning of their relationship with the Lord. (Rev. 2:4)
- “Your people may rejoice in You” – “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.” (John 8:56)

- 85:8 – “I will hear” – Hearing implies waiting and listening.
- This is similar to Habakkuk in Hab. 2:1.
 - A good ear willingly hears what is taught, wisely understands what it hears, and obediently practices what it understands.
 - Jesus promised that the sheep will hear His voice. (John 10:1-16) The shepherd knows how to speak in a way the sheep will understand. The burden is not on the sheep to try to understand an unintelligible language.

85:9 – “near to those who fear Him” – God is not found in the heavens or in the depths, but He is near us; “in your mouth.” (Deut. 30:11-14)

- 85:10 – “Mercy and truth have met together” – Jesus died on the cross so that God could “be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:26)
- Jesus has come in the fullness of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

Chapter 86:

Ps. 86 – “Personal Psalm of Seeking God’s Mercy.”

- Elohim is mentioned 5 times, Jehovah 4 times, and Adonai 7 times.
- In 17 verses, David makes reference to himself 35 times. This is intensely personal.
- Nearly every verse of Ps. 86 is also found in another psalm.

86:1 – “poor and needy” – This is the only way to come to God.

86:2 – “holy” – (Heb. “hasid”) Lit. “devoted to God.”

- Holiness and trusting go hand in hand.

86:4 – “Your servant” – Jesus took the form of a servant. (Phil. 2:7)

- “I lift up my soul” – When standing on the earth, you are in heaven, if you love God.

86:5 – “abundant in mercy” – After adultery and murder, David knew God’s mercy well.

- David’s knowledge of the nature of God leads him to ask of God things that pertain to His nature.

86:7 – “You will answer” – This is David’s confidence in God.

- There can be no reason for praying if there be no expectation of the Lord’s answering. David, as the following verses show, believed the Lord to be a living and potent God, and indeed to be “God alone” (v. 10), and it was on that account that he resolved in every hour of trouble to call upon Him.

86:9 – “All nations...Shall come and worship before You” – This is either speaking of the tribes of all the earth being represented in heaven, or it speaks of the worldwide worship of God during the millennial reign of Christ.

86:10 – “You alone are God” – God has no peers or equals.

86:11 – “Teach me...Unite my heart” – Two requests, to learn and obey.

- “Teach me” – Are we selective with what we will allow God to touch in our lives?
 - He can say that even in the midst of a trial.
 - Because of our bent to sin, we need to be taught to know anything of value.
 - A man untaught of the Holy Ghost may know a moral, but he can never desire to know a Spiritual Being.
- “I will walk in Your truth” – Conforming one’s life to Scripture.
 - Obedience is an excellent way of commenting upon the Bible.
- “Unite my heart” – It is the undivided heart which keeps us from walking in the truth.

86:14 – “violent” – “Men” is in italics. This may refer to physical or spiritual enemies.

86:17 – “helped and comforted me” – That is who God is.

Chapter 87:

Ps. 87 – “Jerusalem in the Messianic Age.”

87:1 – “His foundation” – Jerusalem is the center of God’s universe.

- Not on the sand of carnal policy nor in the morass of human kingdoms has the Lord founded His church, but on His own power and Godhead.

87:2 – “The Lord loves the gates of Zion” – There is something special about gathering together as believers.

87:4 – “Rahab” – This is probably a reference to Egypt.

87:5 – “This one and that one were born in her” – God’s reception of Gentiles.

87:6 – “The Lord will record” – God keeps excellent records.

87:7 – “springs” – The idea is “source, fountains, or refreshing.”

Chapter 88:

Ps. 88 – “Psalm of Despair.”

- The Talmud interprets Psalm 88 from Israel’s perspective, making the “acquaintances” (v. 8) Gentiles and the “loved one” (v. 18) the Messiah. With that interpretation, the Messiah coming to Israel in an unexpected way would lead to his rejection and cry as expressed in v. 13-18.
- “Mahalath Leannoth” – means “in the dance.” This may be the postscript to the previous psalm rather than the prelude to Psalm 88.
- “Contemplation” – (Heb. “Maschil”) Lit. “instruction.”
- “Heman” – A temple musician under David (1 Chron. 6:33) or a wise-man, a contemporary of Solomon (1 Kings 4:31).
- “Ezrahite” – Does this mean he was of the lineage of Ezra?

88:1 – “God of my salvation” – He says this while waiting for his full salvation.

88:3 – “my life draws near to the grave” – He is struggling with a physical illness.

- Some speculate that Heman is dealing with leprosy.

- 88:5 – “Whom You remember no more” – This is not true for the New Testament believer.
- 88:8 – “I am shut up, and I cannot get out” – There are times when an unspeakable sadness steals upon me, an immense loneliness takes possession of my soul.
- 88:9 – “called daily upon You” – He repeats his prayer to God. (v. 1, 13)
 - He is dealing with unanswered prayer.
- 88:10 – “Shall the dead arise and praise You” – We know they do, but the psalmist is seeing this from the vantage point of earth. (v. 5)
 - We have the sustaining hope of resurrection. Yes, God’s wonders shall be known at the grave’s mouth.
- 88:11 – “lovingkindness be declared in the grave” – Here is a striking figure of what a living soul feels under the manifestations of the deep corruptions of his heart. What! Will You manifest Your love to a stinking corpse?
- 88:14 – “Why do You hide Your face from me?” – We may put these questions to the Lord, no, we ought to do so.
- 88:15 – “ready to die from my youth” – How much some suffer!
- 88:18 – “Loved one and friend You have put far from me” – Lonely sorrow falls to the lot of not a few; let them not repine, but enter herein into close communion with that Dearest Lover and Friend Who is never far from His tried ones.
 - Job, under his grievous affliction, complained thus.
 - Behold Jesus, the Man of sorrows and the acquaintance of grief.
 - “darkness” – The psalmist never comes out of the darkness in this psalm.
 - What work, think you, was Daniel doing in the lion’s den, or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace? Their work was glorious. Some will serve and honor God in suffering. (Heb. 11:35-40)
 - When facing a situation we don’t understand, we must fall back on what we do understand.

Chapter 89:

- Ps. 89 – Theme: “Remembering the Promises of God.”
 - This psalm focuses on the faithfulness of God in the face of God’s present chastening of His people.
 - “Ethan” – Possibly another name for Jeduthan. (1 Chron. 6:44; 15:19)
- 89:1 – “I will sing” – We often think that when we are in trouble we get ease by complaining.
 - “Your faithfulness” – A major theme of this psalm. (v. 1, 2, 5, 8, 33)
- 89:3-37 – “I have made” – This is God’s response.
- 89:3 – “covenant with My chosen” – He is referring to God’s promises made to David to bring from the line of David a Messiah for the salvation of His people.
- 89:5 – “Your wonders” – It is a wonderful salvation. It is such a salvation as the angels desire to look into it.

- 89:6 – “Who in the heavens can be compared to the Lord?” – God’s holiness makes Him distinct from everything and everyone else.
- We see something every day that God cannot see – our equals.
- 89:7 – “held in reverence” – Our culture knows very little about reverence.
- The Church must stand between legalism and irreverence to honor God with a proper reverence.
- 89:10 – “Rahab” – This is likely referring to Egypt and the sin it represents.
- 89:12 – “Tabor” – This is the mountain many believe Jesus was transfigured upon.
- 89:14 – “Mercy and truth” – Exemplified perfectly in Jesus. (John 1:14)
- Mercy in promising; truth in performing. Truth in being as good as your word; mercy in being better.
- 89:15 – “They walk...in the light” – And what is that holy walking which God’s Spirit enables all His people to observe? It is a continued, progressive motion from sin to holiness; from all that is evil, to every good word and work.
- 89:18 – “they are exalted” – Whom God exalts, let us exalt.
- 89:17 – “our horn” – The horn was often a representation of power or authority.
- 89:19 – “exalted one chosen” – Jesus, the Messiah
- 89:20 – “My servant David” – David serves as a type of Christ in his anointing by going about 15 years from the time of his anointing to taking the throne of Israel.
- 89:25 – “over the rivers” – David expanded the territory of Israel to about 60,000 sq. mi.
- 89:26 – “You are my Father” – It is striking that we do not find anywhere in the Old Testament that the patriarchs or prophets called God their Father.
- 89:28 – “My covenant shall stand firm” – With Jesus, the covenant is ratified by blood of sacrifice and by the oath of God.
- 89:32-33 – “punish their transgression...My lovingkindness I will not utterly take away” – This is how God cares for prodigals. He can punish them, while loving them at the same time.
- God’s sons don’t get away with anything. He chastens the sons that He loves. (Heb. 12:6)
 - God brought the Messiah out of David’s rebellious children.
- 89:35 – “I will not lie” – God cannot lie. (Titus 1:2) His promises will come to pass.
- “For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” (2 Cor. 1:20)
- 89:38-45 – “You have” – This is stated 13 times in 8 verses. God is still in control.

89:38 – “But You have cast off” – Their present condition seems to completely contradict all the previous promises of God.

- These circumstances may be a result of transgression. (v. 32)

89:40 – “hedges” – These are the barriers to a vineyard, which was often fenced around with a stone wall, and in it was a small house or tower wherein a keeper was set to keep away intruders.

89:46 – “How long?” – He is looking to God with expectancy.

- An eye bleared with present sorrow sees not far.

89:48 – “live and not see death” – Life is temporary and frail.

89:50 – “I bear in my bosom” – This has touched the psalmist’s heart.

89:52 – “Amen and Amen” – This is the postscript to Book 3 of the Psalms.

Chapter 90:

Ps. 90 – Theme: “The Brevity of Human Life.”

- “of Moses” – The oldest psalm in the book of Psalms.
 - Moses himself saw the glory of God in Exod. 34.
- “the man of God” – This was said of Moses in Joshua 14:6.

90:1 – “You have been our dwelling place” – Not in the tabernacle or the temple do we dwell, but in God Himself. Wanderers though we be in the howling wilderness, yet we find a home in Thee.

- “in all generations” – For Moses, that would go all the way back to Genesis.

90:2 – “everlasting” – Lit. “beyond the vanishing point.”

90:3 – “You turn man to destruction” – Observe how the action of God is recognized. Man is not said to die because of the decree of faith, or the action of inevitable law, but the Lord is made the agent of all.

- “to destruction” – The idea is, man will return “to dust.”
 - The same 17 elements found in dirt are also found in the human body.

90:4 – “a thousand years in Your sight” – “With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (2 Pet. 3:8)

- “like yesterday” – God’s timelessness.
 - The Scriptures tell us “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8) and the Lord is the One “who is and who was and who is to come” (Rev. 1:8)
 - The God challenge: “Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; Let them show the former things, what they were.” (Isa. 41:22)

90:5 – “They are like a sleep” – The temporality of humans is contrasted with the eternity of God.

- “like grass which grows up” – As grass is green in the morning and hay at night, so men are changed from health to corruption in a few hours.
 - “All flesh is grass.” (Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:24-25)

90:7 – “consumed by Your anger” – Martin Luther said of this psalm, “When a monk, it often happened to me when I read this psalm, that I was compelled to lay the book out of my hand. But I knew not that these terrors were not addressed to an awakened mind. I knew not that Moses was speaking to a most obdurate and proud multitude, which neither understood nor cared for the anger of God, nor were humbled by their calamities, or even the prospect of death.”

- We are so faint-hearted that if the anger of a single prince or king, nay, even of a single neighbor, is to be borne, we tremble and droop in spirit. How much more then ought we to fear the King of kings?
- “by Your wrath we are terrified” – It is a holy awe of God, and that alone, which makes us truly and deeply feel His anger.
- No man knows the full power of God’s anger, because that power has never yet put itself forth to its full stretch.

90:8 – “set our iniquities before You” – This would be like having all the secret time my dad would be hurt by me, openly and brashly displayed before him.

- “our secret sins” – Nothing is a secret to God. (Heb. 4:13)

90:8 – “like a sigh” – The Chaldee has it, “Like the breath of our mouth in winter.”

90:10 – “eighty years” – Moses lived to 120 years, and “His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.” (Deut. 34:7)

- Moses saw a lot of death in the wilderness. (Num. 14:26-35)

90:12 – “teach us” – Moses sends us to God for teaching.

- “teach us to number our days” – Many overestimate the number.
- “number our days” – Living in the light of eternity will lead us to wisdom.
- We number our days by our daily obedience and daily acts of love.
- “Only one life, will soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last.”
- “gain a heart of wisdom” – Wisdom is to be preferred over merely surviving through this life or, even worse, trying to make a gain in this life.
- The chief pursuit of life should be the attainment of an experimental knowledge of Jesus.

90:14 – “satisfy us” – Only God can do that. There is an insufficiency of everything earthly to meet our cravings.

- “early” – Since they must die and die so soon, the psalmist pleads for speedy mercy upon himself and his brethren.

90:15 – “according to the days in which You have afflicted us” – God can even take our wasted years and use them for His glory.

- God, who is great in justice when He chastens, will not be little in mercy when He blesses; he will be great all through.

90:16 – “glory to their children” – How eagerly do good men plead for their children.

90:17 – “establish the work of our hands” – We come and go, but the Lord’s work abides. When we have withered like grass, our holy service, like gold, silver, and precious stones, will survive the fire.

Chapter 91:

Ps. 91 – Theme: “The Safety of God’s Presence.”

- Because this is an orphan psalm following a psalm we know was written by Moses, some attribute this psalm to Moses too. The Jewish doctors consider that when the author’s name is not mentioned, we may assign the psalm to the last-named writer.
- Undoubtedly, the tempter was right in referring this psalm to “the Son of God.” (Matt. 4:6)

91:1 – “who dwells in the secret place” – The blessings here promised are not for all believers, but for those who live in close fellowship with God.

- It is therefore the making of God our habitation upon which our safety lies.
- “the shadow of the Almighty” – The covering of His presence.
 - Moses knew the shadow of Almighty God. (Exod. 33:23)
 - Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.” (John 15:5)

91:3 – “the snare of the fowler” – A hidden trap.

- Are not the riches of this world then, the snare of the devil?

91:4 – “under His wings” – “How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing.” (Luke 13:34; Matt. 23:37)

- A proselyte of Judaism was said to “trust under the wings of the God of Israel.” (Ruth 2:12)
- “truth shall be your shield” – His word is for our protection.
- “buckler” – Lit. “to wrap around.” This was a full-body shield.

91:7 – “it shall not come near you” – The evil one comes and touches us not. (1 John 5:18)

- The man who communes with God is not affected by the contagion; he holds the truth when falsehood is all the fashion.

91:8 – “the reward of the wicked” – This comes at the judgment of the Great White Throne.

91:9 – “the Most High, your dwelling place” – Dependence on Christ is the qualification of the person that shall be hid.

91:11 – “His angels charge over you” – There are over 300 hundred references to angels in the Bible. (Ps. 34:7; 103:20; Heb. 1:14; 12:22)

- “angels” – Not one guardian angel, as some fondly dream, but all the angels are here alluded to.
- “keep you in all your ways” – Much of God’s protection in our lives is in giving us direction to keep us out of trouble and pain.
 - Satan fails to quote this part of the verse in his temptation of Jesus. (Matt. 4:6)

91:13 – “the lion and the cobra” – In Scripture, the lion and the serpent are images of Satan. (1 Pet. 5:8; Gen. 3; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9; 20:2; Luke 10:19)

- “serpent you shall trample underfoot” – “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” (Rom. 16:20)

91:14 – “Because he has set his love upon Me” – This is a conditional promise, but all God is asking for is our love. He does not say, “Because he is without sin; because he has perfectly kept all my precepts; because he has merit and is worthy to be delivered and guarded.”

91:15 – “deliver him and honor him” – God first gives us conquering grace, and then rewards us for it.

91:16 – “long life” – Jesus promised “eternal life.” (John 3:16)

- “My salvation” – When God has satisfied His servant with length of days, and time for him is over, eternity begun, He will show him His salvation.

Chapter 92:

Ps. 92 – Theme: “The Sovereign Rule of God.”

- “Sabbath” – means “rest.”

- This psalm was traditionally sung on the second day of the Feast of Tabernacles.
- In the postexilic liturgy of the temple, this psalm came to be sang at the time of the morning sacrifice on the Sabbath. (The rest of the weekly schedule was: first day – Ps. 24; second day – Ps. 48; third day – Ps. 82; fourth day – Ps. 94; fifth day – Ps. 81; and the sixth day – Ps. 93.)

92:1 – “give thanks to the Lord” – Both publically and privately.

- Praise is Sabbatic work, the joyful occupation of resting hearts.
- “sing praises” – Sing, sing, sing. (Ps. 149:1; Isa. 26:19; 42:10-11; 65:14)

92:2 – “in the morning...every night” – This is a good way to begin and end the day.

92:3 – “On an instrument” – Instruments are permitted by the Lord.

92:4 – “For” – The psalmist is giving us some reasons to praise God.

- “the works of Your hands” – We know those hands were pierced with nails.

92:5 – “Your thoughts are very deep” – His ways are higher than ours. (Isa. 55:8-9)

- Verily, my brethren, there is no sea as deep as these thoughts of God, Who makes the wicked flourish and the good suffer.

92:6 – “senseless man does not know” – The fool doesn’t know the real reason why he is flourishing.

- “fool” – This is a man who says in his heart there is no God. (Ps. 14:1)
- A man must either be a saint or a fool, he has no other choice.

92:7 – “wicked spring up like grass...destroyed forever” – There is no need to envy the wicked; their prosperity is only temporary.

92:9 – “Your enemies shall perish” – Treason against the great King ought not to go unpunished.

- “workers of iniquity” – Natural and spiritual; human and demonic.

92:12 – “righteous shall flourish like the palm tree” – This song now contrasts the condition of the righteous with that of the graceless. The wicked “spring up like grass” (v. 7), but the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, whose growth may not be so rapid, but whose endurance for centuries is in fine contrast with the transitory verdure of the meadow.

- “palm tree” – The secret of the palm tree is that it has its head in the fire and its feet in the sand. The palm tree grows from the sand, but the sand is not its food; water from below feeds its tap roots, though the heavens above be brass.
- The palm tree is beautiful. Its branches shoot upwards and seek the things above where Christ dwells. It is very useful and produces even to old age.

92:13 – “planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts” – We gather together to be built up so we can live “out there.”

92:14 – “bear fruit in old age” – In contrast to the wicked who flourish and fade quickly.

- Constancy is an ingredient in the obedience Christ requires. (John 15:5)

Chapter 93:

Psalm 93 – Theme: “The Power of God over the Storm.”

- The Jewish interpreters say this psalm “treats of the things which will take place in the times of Messiah.”

93:1 – “The Lord reigns” – “Only let me be sure that, in any and every respect, I am on the Lord’s side and in the Lord’s way, and I ask no more” – Alfred Edersheim.

- “girded Himself with strength” – May the Lord appear in His Church, in our day, in manifest majesty and might, saving sinners, slaying errors, and honoring His own name.

93:2 – “of old” – This is a Hebrew phrase to signify an eternity without any beginning. (Prov. 8:22)

93:3 – “floods” – Often an idiom for masses of people.

- “lifted up their voice” – The raging of the multitudes cannot move God from the throne.

93:4 – “the sea” – The Jews were terrified of the open sea.

Chapter 94:

Psalm 94 – Theme: “The Wickedness of Man (v. 1-11) and the Righteousness of God (v. 12-23).”

94:1 – “God, to whom vengeance belongs” – “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.” (Rom. 12:19; see also Deut. 32:35)

- “vengeance” – means “to uphold the law and give justice to those who have been wronged.”
 - I do not think that we sufficiently attend to the distinction that exists between revenge and vengeance. Revenge is an act of passion, vengeance of justice. Injuries are revenged; crimes avenged.
 - If the execution of justice be a right thing, then it must be a very proper thing to desire it; not out of private revenge, but out of sympathy with right.

94:2 – “proud” – Lit. “to see myself above.”

94:4 – “How long?” – We know vengeance is God’s (Rom. 12:19), but we’d often like it to hurry up.

- God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. (Ezek. 18:23,32; 2 Pet. 3:9)
- God measures time morally, not by the hands on a clock.

94:5 – “afflict Your heritage” – There is a concerted effort against God’s people.

94:9 – “shall He not see?” – Nothing escapes God’s gaze.

- “All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” (Heb. 4:13)

94:10 – “teaches man knowledge” – God knows all, and is able to teach some of it to humans.

94:11 – “The Lord knows...” – This verse is quoted by Paul in 1 Cor. 3:20.

- “the thoughts of man, that they are futile” – We may observe that this dreadful disease is ascribed to mankind in general. (James 4:14)
- “futile” – “Man as his best estate is altogether vanity.” (Eccl. ??)
- His thoughts are consumed by that which is meaningless in light of eternity.

94:12 – “the man whom You instruct” – He submits himself to the authority of God.

- He’s no longer focused on the enemies, but rather on the Lord.
- “instruct” – The idea is “chasten,” all that is necessary for our learning.
- God chastens the sons that He loves. And He never chastens us selfishly; He only ever instructs us for our benefit. (Heb. 12:5-11)
- Where God loves, He afflicts in love. And wherever God afflicts in love, there He will first and last teach such souls such lessons as shall do them good to all eternity.

94:13 – “give him rest” – God’s instruction will keep us out of trouble.

- Let there be a revival of the passive virtues. Many speak of them slightly, especially as compared with the dashing qualities so highly esteemed in the world. But quietness of mind and of spirit, like a broken heart, is of great price in the sight of God.
- The world cannot offer peace and rest, so it doesn’t even try. Instead, it tells us to fight and hurry to get ahead.

94:17 – “the Lord had been my help” – This is the answer to his questions.

- God will always empower us to make the stands He has called us to.

94:19 – “Your comforts delight” – Earthly comforts only appease for a short time.

94:20 – “evil by law” – Governments around the world have decreed much evil; ie. abortions or terrorism.

94:21 – “condemn innocent blood” – This description is historically true in reference to persecuting times.

94:23 – “cut them off” – Jesus instructed NT believers to “pray for those who spitefully use you.” (Luke 6:28)

- They are men of such a kind that there is no curing of them; they will never have done doing mischief until they be cut off by death. Therefore, God threatens death to deter men from sin.

Chapter 95:

Psalm 95 – Theme: “The Shepherd’s Rest.”

- This psalm is an invitation to participate in the Kingdom of the Shepherd.
- The author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 95 as “in David.” (Heb. 4:7)

95:2 – “come before His presence with thanksgiving” – They are entering the Temple precincts with singing.

- Zechariah speaks of the day when 10 men of Gentile nations will grab the garment of an individual Jew and ask to be taken to Jesus. (Zech. 8:23)
- “His presence” – Here is probably a reference to the peculiar presence of God in the Holy of Holies above the mercy-seat, and also to the glory which shone forth out of the cloud which rested above the tabernacle; the Manifest Presence of God.
- “joyfully” – People are so impressed with the idea that they ought to be serious that they put on the aspect of misery and quite forget that joy is as much a characteristic of true worship as solemnity itself.

95:3-5 – “the great King...Lord our Maker” – God is both King and Creator.

95:4 – “deep places...heights” – God is both the God of the mountains and of the valleys.

95:6 – “before the Lord” – Not before a crucifix, not before a rotten image, not before a fair picture of a foul saint: these are not our makers. We made them; they made not us.

95:7 – “the sheep of His hand” – Jesus is the good Shepherd. (John 10:11)

- “if you will hear” – This is an exhortation to be willing to hear God’s voice.
 - Jesus said “My sheep hear My voice.” (John 10:27)
 - God condescends to speak to us. (Heb. 1:1-2)
- “if” – The condition of the shepherd.

95:8 – “in the rebellion” – At Kadesh Barnea, when Israel refused to go into Canaan.

- They failed to act on God’s word to them as a nation.
- These things were written as our examples. (1 Cor. 10:11)

95:9 – “tested Me” – In short, unbelief of every kind and every degree may be said to tempt God. For not to believe upon the evidence which He has seen fit to give is to provoke Him to give more.

- If we were forever testing the love of our wife or husband, and remain unconvinced after years of faithfulness, we should wear out the utmost of human patience. Friendship only flourishes in the atmosphere of confidence.
- Faith that wants stuff from God rather than God Himself is, at worst, a selfish and sinful faith and, at best, not faith at all.

95:10 – “For forty years I was grieved” – Oh, the desperate presumption of man. Oh, the patience and longsuffering of his Maker.

- “grieved” – The word is a strong word, expressive of loathing and disgust.
- “they do not know My ways” – Despite seeing His work. (v. 9)
 - They are walking in presumption.

- 95:11 – “not enter My rest” – “There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.” (Heb. 4:9)
- This rest is a deep-seated trust in our relationship with God that assures us that all things will work together for the good of those who love Him. Rest comes from being in God’s presence and will. As long as we are doubting God, the fellowship between us is hindered.
 - There can be no rest to an unbelieving heart. Our lack of trust directly leads to our lack of rest. Our friendship with God is hindered simply because we can’t trust Him.

Chapter 96:

Psalm 96 – This psalm is part of that which was delivered into the hand of Asaph and his brethren (1 Chron. 16:7), which appears both that David was the writer and that it has reference to bringing the ark to Jerusalem. (1 Chron. 16:23-33)

96:1-2 – “sing” – 3 times.

96:1 – “new song” – God greets the new heavens and earth with a new song.

96:2 – “Proclaim the good news” – Believers are to “be witnesses.” (Acts 1:8)

- “from day to day” – The best witness is in daily life.

96:5 – “all the gods” – Money, power, pleasure...anything that is creation and not the Creator.

- “idols” – Lit. “things that are nothing, weak, and worthless.”

96:7-8 – “Give” – 3 times. Lit. “ascribe, credit, attribute.”

96:8 – “the glory due His name” – There is a vast difference between the tribute which men ought to have paid to God and that which they actually have paid.

96:9 – “beauty of holiness” – It doesn’t say holiness is a grind or burden, but it is beautiful.

- “holiness” – Lit. “separateness.” We are to be separated from and separated unto.
 - Without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Heb. 12:14)
 - Holiness is most clearly demonstrated in Jesus.

96:10 – “the nations” – Jews and Gentiles; believers and unbelievers alike.

- “judge the people’s righteously” – There will be no corruption in the judicial system.

96:12 – “the trees of the woods will rejoice” – “All the trees of the fields shall clap their hands.” (Isa. 55:12)

- “The earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:19)

96:13 – “He is coming” – That is the reason for the celebration. It will be the happiest day our world has ever seen.

- “to judge the earth” – He will put all things in order.

Chapter 97:

Psalm 97 – Theme: “The Messiah setting up His Kingdom.”

97:1 – “The Lord reigns” – “The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.” (Dan. 4:17)

- This is the same God who was crucified.

97:2-5 – A description of Jesus when He comes to set up the Kingdom Age.

- Jesus will take all power and authority into His own hands.

97:2 – “Clouds and darkness surround Him” – When Jesus comes again, He will come with clouds. (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7)

97:3 – “fire goes before Him” – When Jesus returns He will destroy the wicked one with the word of His mouth and the brightness of His appearing. (2 Thess. 2:8)

- This is similar to the presentation of the Law at Sinai. (Exod. 20)

97:5 – “the presence of the Lord” – Oh, for the presence of the Lord after this sort with His church at this hour! It is our one and only need.

97:7 – “Worship Him, all you gods” – All forms of idolatry will bow before Jesus.

97:8 – “Zion hears and is glad” – This is the prophetic past tense. The psalmist sees it as done even though it hasn’t happened yet.

97:10 – “love the Lord, hate evil” – These two things go together. (Rom. 12:9)

- The believer is to hate the things that God hates.
- To love and to hate spring from one and the same source.
- “evil” – This is a word we don’t hear in modern society anymore.

97:11 – “Light” – “Anything that does make manifest is light.” (Eph. 5:13)

- God has lightening for sinners (v. 4) and light for saints.

Chapter 98:

Psalm 98 – “The Coronation of the King.”

98:1 – “new song” – Every move of God through Church history has been accompanied by its own music.

- “marvelous things” – God has done marvelous things with our lives.
- “the victory” – Jesus gained the victory by His death and resurrection.

98:2 – “The Lord” – This is man’s end, to seek God in this life, to see God in the next; to be a subject in the kingdom of grace, and a saint in the kingdom of glory.

- “His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations” – Even the guy on the island.

98:2-3 – “righteousness...mercy” – These two qualities come together in Jesus.

98:4 – “Shout joyfully” – (KJV “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord”)

98:7 – “Let the sea roar” – This is when creation will be redeemed.

98:9 – “For He is coming” – This is the reason for joy.

- If ever there was a thing to rejoice in upon this poor, traving earth, it is the coming of such a Deliverer, the ascension to the universal throne of such a Governor.
- “with righteousness He shall judge the world” – Throughout eternity, God’s judgments will be recognized as good and righteous. He will get it right.
 - The rule of Christ is the joy of nature. All things bless his throne.
- “equity” – Honesty and fairness.

Chapter 99:

Psalm 99 – “The Character of the King.”

- This psalm has three parts, in which the Lord is celebrated as He who is to come, as He who now is, and as He who was.

99:1 – “reigns” – Present tense. Even now.

- “Let the people’s tremble!” – Psalm 97:1 says to rejoice at God’s reign. Both rejoicing and trembling must happen.
- “cherubim” – This angelic order continually guards the way to God’s presence. (Gen. 3; Ezek. 1, 10; Rev. 4)

99:3 – “Your great and awesome name” – “Against this, the sympathy of man’s evil heart with sin rebels; it cries out for an effeminate God in whom pity has strangled justice” – Charles Spurgeon.

- “He is holy” – This refrain is repeated in v. 3, 5, and 9.
 - His power is not His choicest jewel, nor His sovereignty, but His holiness.
 - We can worship the Lord because of His character; for who He is.

99:4 – “equity” – Honesty and fairness. (Ps. 98:9)

99:6 – “He answered them” – Moses, Aaron, and Samuel served as intercessors before God. (Jer. 15:1)

99:7 – “kept His testimonies” – These three men were typified by obedience.

99:8 – “You took vengeance on their deeds” – This applies to either the people who rebelled, even though God answered their prayers, or to the prophets themselves, who were personally punished at times.

- Despite His forgiveness, God still made Moses, Aaron, and Samuel deal with the consequences of their sins. Moses for striking the rock, Aaron for building a golden calf, and Samuel for failing to discipline his sons.

99:9 – “His holy hill” – This is Jerusalem during the millennial reign.

Chapter 100:

Ps. 100 – “of Thanksgiving” – The thanksgiving is a response of praise.

- This psalm was sung by pilgrims early in the history of the United States.

100:1 – “all the lands” – God’s glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the seas. (Hab. 2:14)

100:2 – “Serve the Lord with gladness” – Because we “get to,” not because we “got to.”

- If you cannot serve the Lord with gladness, it would be better for you not to serve at all. Manipulated or guilt-tripped service actually yields bad fruit.

100:3 – “the Lord, He is God” – From the reasons of this exhortation, learn that such is our natural atheism, that we have need again and again to be instructed that the Lord is God.

- To disclaim honor for ourselves is as necessary a part of true reverence as to ascribe glory to the Lord.
- “He who has made us” – We did not evolve.
 - There is no self-made man.
- “and not we ourselves” – The Masoretes, by altering one letter in the Hebrew, read it, ‘He made us, and His we are,’ or ‘to Him we belong.’ Put both the readings together, and we learn that because God “made us, and not we ourselves,” therefore we are not our own but His. (Rev. 4:11)

100:4-5 – People write books on “The 7 Steps of Prayer” from this verse, but really only one step is needed. Talk with Jesus. Prayer is the natural outgrowth of the new birth.

100:5 – “the Lord is good” – His goodness is essential to His character.

Chapter 101:

Ps. 101 – “Psalm of Pius Resolutions.”

- v. 1-4: David’s private holiness; v. 5-8: David’s public leadership.

101:1 – “mercy and justice” – God’s reign properly balances the two.

101:2 – “perfect” – The idea is “upright” or “with integrity.”

- This psalm is full of stern exclusiveness, of noble intolerance, not against theological error, not against uncourtly manners, not against political insubordination, but against the proud heart, the high look, the secret slanderer, the deceitful worker, and the teller of lies. These are the outlaws from King David’s court.
- “walk within my house with a perfect heart” – He has determined to live all of his life with integrity.
 - The one requirement for all church leadership is to have their houses in order.
 - It is easier for most men to walk with a perfect heart in the church, or even in the world, than in their own families.
 - We will have no impact on this world if our public life does not match our private life.
 - What we are at home, that we are indeed.

101:3 – “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes” – Lit. “I will set no word of Belial before mine eyes.”

- “nothing wicked before my eyes” – Internet, movies, TV commercials, etc.
 - “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’” (1 Cor. 15:33)
 - “Be innocent concerning evil.” (Rom. 16:19)
- “those who fall away” – Spiritual compromise.
- “not cling to me” – David will not let the effects of those who are spiritually compromising affect his life.
- “cling” – The same Hebrew word as “joined” in Gen. 2:24. It literally means “woven into.”

101:4 – “perverse” – The original sense is “contortion;” that is, to twist together, and denotes, when applied to men, persons at a perverse, subtle disposition, that can twist and twine themselves into all manner of shapes, and who have no truth or honor to be depended on.
- “depart from me” – David will not find fellowship with unbelievers.

101:5-8 – These are the qualifications of David’s cabinet.

101:5 – “proud” – Lit. “wide, expanded.” This describes people who are inflated with their own importance.

101:6 – “My eyes shall be on the faithful” – He will protect people of faith and character.
- “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.” (2 Chron. 16:9)
- “walks in a perfect way” – Surround yourself with people of Godly character.
- “serve” – David is looking for people who will build others up, rather than tearing them down.
- What I wish myself to be, that I desire my servant to be. Employers are to a great degree responsible for their servants, and it is customary to blame a master if he retains in his service persons of notorious character.

101:8 – “cut off all the evil doers” – This is a great commitment, but David will fail at keeping it.

Chapter 102:

Ps. 102 – “the afflicted” – Possibly referring to the Babylonian captivity. Affliction results from sin.
- “complaint” – The word rendered “complaint” has in it none of the idea of fault-finding, but should rather be rendered “moaning, or groaning” – the expression of pain, not of rebellion.
- v. 1-11: personal petition; v. 12-22: corporate repentance; v. 23-28: personal prayer.

102:1 – “Hear my prayer, O Lord” – Sincere suppliants are not content with praying for praying’s sake; they desire really to reach the ear and the heart of the great God.

102:2 – “not hide Your face” – He is seeking God’s face, not just the alleviation of pain. (Ps. 27:8)
- “answer me speedily” – When we are hurting, we look for God’s quick response.
- Do we give the same quick response when God calls us?

102:4 – “I forget to eat” – He is hurting so much that he has lost his appetite.
- A heart parched with intense grief often refuses consolation for itself and nourishment for the bodily frame and descends at a doubly rapid rate into weakness, despondency, dismay, and depression.

102:5 – “bones cling to my skin” – He is suffering physically as the result of this affliction.

102:7 – “alone” – He is feeling isolated.
- There is a sanctified loneliness when God leads us to repentance.
- Little do men perceive what solitude it, and how far it extends; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love.

102:9 – “eaten ashes” – He is probably repenting in sackcloth and ashes.

- 102:10 – “For You” – All this is under God’s hand and in His plan.
 - Even in the pain, the psalmist still has his eyes on God.
- 102:11 – “wither away like grass” – These are the consequences of sin.
 - These miseries joined all together make me altogether miserable.
- 102:12-17 – This is possibly referring to the same time period as Ezek. 38-39.
- 102:12 – “endure forever” – God will endure, which stands in contrast to the psalmist himself.
- 102:13 – “the set time” – God’s restoration comes at His appointed time.
 - He will do it, but He has His own appointed season; and meanwhile we must, with holy anxiety and believing expectation, wait upon Him.
 - Daniel understood the “set time” from Jeremiah’s writings. (Dan. 9:2; Jer. 29:10)
- 102:14 – “her dust” – Worthless to the rest of the world, but precious to God’s people because it is a land of promise.
- 102:16 – “the Lord shall build” – Might this still be prophetic?
- 102:17 – “the prayer of the destitute” – Give all your trashy gold – trashy while it is with you – give it to My poor; and I will give you true gold, namely, a sense of your misery and meanness, a longing for grace, purity, and usefulness, a love of your fellowmen, and My love shed abroad in your heart.
- 102:18 – “people yet to be created” – This might refer to the Church, which includes Gentiles.
- 102:20 – “those appointed to death” – Unregenerate sinners.
- 102:22 – “kingdoms” – Plural. All the kingdoms of the world will submit their glory to the Lord.
- 102:23 – “He weakened my strength” – The psalmist is recognizing God’s hand and sovereignty.
- 102:24 – “my God” – Martin Luther said, “Much religion lieth in pronouns.”
 - “in the midst of my days” – He doesn’t want to get cut off in the prime of life.
- 102:25-27 – Quoted in Hebrews 1:10-12.
- 102:25 – “You laid the foundation of the earth” – Referring to God as Creator.
- 102:26 – “grow old like a garment” – Entropy, the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, makes evolution impossible. Things do not naturally get more complex; they naturally break down and get simpler.
 - “You will change them” – The corrupt quality shall be renewed, and all things restored to that original beauty wherein they were created.

102:27 – “You are the same” – God’s immutability is what the believer relishes in and the unbeliever disdains.

102:28 – “children of Your servants will continue” – Passing on the faith to our children is greatly influenced by our servanthood.

Chapter 103:

Psalm 103 – “of David” – David makes no request of God in this psalm, he only makes request of Himself before God.

103:1 – “Bless” – Lit. “to adore, to celebrate, to bend the knee.”

103:2 – “forget not” – David also struggled with forgetting. (Deut. 6:12; 32:18)

- “His benefits” – The benefits of the soul are listed in v. 3-5.

103:3 – “iniquities” – Lit. “twisted, warped, bent.” These are the sins of our nature.

- God doesn’t just forgive the trespass or the sins, but also the iniquities.

- It does not say, “Who forgives your iniquities previous to conversion.” There is no such notion as this in Scripture. Now, Christ not only bore some or many of the believer’s sins, He bore them all, and therefore, God forgives all. Christ’s atonement stretches from past to present to future.

- “heals all your diseases” – A work of the cross (Isa. 53:5) that will find its fulfillment in us in our glorification in heaven.

- For those who are alive, it is true that no disease has killed them yet.

103:4 – “satisfies your mouth” – Lit. “satisfies your desires.”

- “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” (Ps. 23:1)

- “destruction” – Lit. “waste.”

103:5 – “renewed like the eagle’s” – Isa. 40:31.

103:7 – “His ways...His acts” – God is more than just what He does. Moses didn’t know just what God does; He knew who God is.

- The ways of God are listed in v. 7-19.

103:8 – “The Lord is merciful” – This is what God revealed to Moses. (Exod. 34:6-7)

103:9 – “He will not always strive” – God is not out to fight with us all the time.

- “Nor will He keep His anger forever” – He bears no grudges. When the Lord has chastened His child, He has done with His anger.

- God does not suffer His anger with His people to pass into the next world.

103:10 – “not dealt with us according to our sins” – We ought to praise the Lord for what He has not done as well as for what He has wrought for us.

103:11 – “great is His mercy” – God is merciful toward us, because His nature is mercy. That is who He is.

103:12 – “as the east is from the west” – Travelling north to south will only take you 12,000 miles, but travelling east to west can go on forever.

- “transgressions” – The sins of willful disobedience.

103:13 – “As a father pities his children” – Fathers pity their children differently than do mothers. Fathers tend to provide, correct, instruct, and support. The authority of fathers is the children’s covering.

- “those who fear Him” – The fear of God is that deference to God which leads you to subordinate your will to His, makes you intent on pleasing Him, penitent in view of past willfulness, happy in His present smile, transported by His love, and hopeful of His glory.

103:14 – “He remembers” – Even though we may forget.

- “we are dust” – The same 17 elements in the ground are also found in the human body.
 - Our bodies are worm food and fertilizer.

103:16 – “the wind” – The Sirocco, the hot, east wind off the desert.

- “remembers it no more” – Most of us will never made the history books.

103:17 – “But” – God stand in stark contrast to us and our sin.

- “everlasting” – Lit. “beyond the vanishing point.”
 - How vast the contrast between the fading flower and the everlasting God.

103:18 – “His commandments” – To love the Lord and to love others.

103:21 – “His hosts” – These are the rest of His heavenly angels.

103:22 – “O my soul” – This is sometimes the most difficult, or last thing, that ends up blessing the Lord.

Chapter 104:

Psalm 104 – Theme: “The Power of the Creator-God.”

- We have no information as to the author, but the Septuagint assigns it to David.

104:2 – “cover Yourself with light” – God dwells in unapproachable light. (1 Tim. 6:16; see also Rev. 19:8; 1 John 3:2; Exod. 34:29)

- God’s first “let there be” act was to make light. (Gen. 1:3)
- “stretch out the heavens” – God “measured heaven with a span.” (Isa. 40:12)

104:3 – “the beams of His upper chambers” – Heaven is a physical reality.

104:4 – “makes His angels” – Angels are a part of His creation too.

- “His ministers a flame of fire” – Quoted in Heb. 1:7.
 - The seraphim, one class at least of these ministers, have their name from the root signifying “to burn.” (Isa. 6:6)

104:5 – “it should not be moved” – The stability of the earth is of God.

104:6 – “covered it with the deep” – Speaking of the global flood. (Gen. 6-9)

- There are 216 historic records of a worldwide flood from civilizations around the world.

- 104:7 – “they hastened away” – This is God putting the waters of the flood in their place and balancing the earth so it can spin and remain on its course.
- 104:12 – “birds of the heavens have their home” – Jesus said God’s eye was on the sparrow. (Matt. 10:29-31)
- 104:14 – “grass to grow for the cattle” – Humans are not the only creatures God feeds.
- We are fortunate if we have enough ability to stop looking at ourselves and see a little more of the creation.
- 104:15 – “wine” – The Bible speaks often of the dangers of alcoholic wine. (Prov. 23:29-35; 31:4-5; Gen. 9:20-29; Eph. 5:18)
- Leaders have no right to exercise a liberty that will stumble anyone else.
- 104:16 – “The trees of the Lord” – “Like a tree planted by the rivers of water.” (Ps. 1:3)
- 104:18 – “refuge for the rock badgers” – God has provided homes for the animals.
- 104:19 – “the moon for seasons” – This is for humans, God doesn’t need seasons. (Gen. 1:14)
- 104:22 – “the sun rises” – “Were it not that we have seen the sun rise so often, we should think it the greatest of miracles and the most amazing of blessings” – Spurgeon.
- 104:23 – “Man goes out to his work” – It is a blessing of God for man to work. (2 Thess. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8)
- 104:24 – “manifold” – The idea is “multi-faceted.”
- The diversity of creation testifies to a Creator.
- 104:26 – “Leviathan which You have made to play there” – He is great simply because he is doing what he was created to do – play.
- Seen in Job 41:1.
- 104:27 – “in due season” – There is an order to it all.
- 104:28 – “What You give them they gather” – Jesus told us to consider the birds. (Luke 12:24) They are well provided for, but they are not lazy either.
- We have only to gather, for God gives. In temporal things God gives us day by day our daily bread, and our business is simply to gather it. As to spirituals, the principle is true, most emphatically, we have in the matter of grace only to gather what God gives. The natural man thinks that he has to earn divine favor, that he has to purchase the blessing of heaven, but he is in grave error. The soul has only to receive that which Jesus freely gives.
- 104:29 – “troubled” – (Heb. “bahal”) Lit. “trembled.”
- “take away their breath” – Note here that death is caused by the act of God.
 - “breath” – God breathed into Adam “the breath of life.” (Gen. 2:7)
- 104:32 – “they smoke” – This may be referring to geological activity.

104:34 – “May my meditation be sweet to Him” – A Christian needs to study nothing but Christ.

104:35 – “the wicked be no more” – May the earth be purged of that which alone mars it.

- “Praise the Lord” – Lit. “Hallelujah.”

- This is the first time that we meet with “Hallelujah” and it comes in here upon occasion of the destruction of the wicked. The last time we meet with it, it is upon the like occasion, where the New Testament Babylon is consumed, and this is the burden of the song – “Hallelujah.” (Rev. 19:1-6)

Chapter 105:

Psalm 105 – A Psalm of God’s Faithfulness in the History of His People.

- Vv. 1-15 are repeated in 1 Chron. 16:8-22 after David brought the ark to Jerusalem. (That may mean that David was the author of this psalm.)

105:1 – “Call upon” – Communication directed God-ward; prayer.

- “Make known” – Communication directed towards people; testifying.

105:2 – “Sing” – Worship in song.

- “Talk of all His wondrous works” – Fellowshiping over God and His work.
- When we speak of God, He stoops to hear and records it in a book of remembrance.

105:3-4 – “Seek” – 3 times.

105:4 – “Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face’ – First we seek Him, then His strength, and then His face. From the personal reverence we pass on to the imparted power and then to the conscious favor.

- “Seek His face” – Not just seeking God’s hand.
- God’s presence is the great answer to all our needs. Communion with God.

105:5 – “Remember” – We forget so easily. (Heb. 2:1)

105:6 – “seed of Abraham” – Referring to Israel.

- “Jacob, His chosen” – Election is not a couch for ease, but an argument for seven-fold diligence.

105:8 – “He remembers His covenant” – God is faithful to keep His promises.

- “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” (2 Tim. 2:13)
- The “God, who cannot lie” will always keep His promises. (Titus 1:2)
- “a thousand generations” – Exod. 20:6; Deut. 7:9.

105:9 – “The covenant” – God started His work through Israel by making a promise to an idolatrous man in Ur of the Chaldeans. (Gen. 12:1-2)

- Christians are the children of Abraham through faith.

105:12 – “they were few in number” – The blessings promised to the seed of Abraham were not dependent upon the number of his descendents or their position in this world.

105:14 – “He permitted no one to do them wrong” – It does not say that He did altogether prevent all wrong and injuries, for they received many at they went through those lands; but at no time did He let it go unpunished.

- “rebuked kings” – God visited both Pharaoh and Abimelech to deliver Sarah.

105:15 – “Do not touch My anointed ones” – God’s protective covering over His chosen.

105:16 – “a famine” – God’s way of getting Israel into Egypt.

105:17 – “He sent a man before them” – Joseph comes to Egypt through the brothers’ scheming, selling him into slavery, and then prison. He brethren sold him, but God sent him.

- This is God’s program to deliver his people. Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Josiah, Nehemiah, Jonah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Paul...and Jesus.
- Our Lord’s path to His mediatorial throne ran by the cross of Calvary.
- “Joseph” – Joseph gets more print than anyone else in the book of Genesis.

105:18 – “hurt his feet” – Septuagint translates this “humbled his feet.”

105:19 – “tested” – The idea is “tried in the furnace.”

- In the gloom of that imprisonment, it was most hard to believe in God’s faithfulness, when his affliction had risen from his obedience. It is most hard to keep the promise clearly before him, when his mighty trouble would perpetually tempt him to regard it as an idle dream.
- Elisha’s anointing on his ministry came 10 years after his call.

105:21 – “lord of his house” – Joseph was taken from prison and raised to the second most powerful position in the world in 24 hours time.

105:24 – “increased His people” – God transforms His people from a tribe to a nation in Egypt.

105:25 – “He turned their heart to hate His people” – God’s way of getting Israel out of Egypt.

- This came as the Hyxos dynasty was removed and a Pharaoh took power “who did not know Joseph.” (Exod. 1:8)
- God had to give Israel a reason to leave Egypt. They had grown fat and comfortable in Egypt. It was His goodness to Israel which called forth the ill-will of the Egyptian court.

105:27-36 – The plagues of Egypt.

105:28 – “darkness” – The sun was a leading object of devotion among the Egyptians under the name of Osiris. The very name Pharaoh means not only the king, but also the sun, and characterizes the king himself as the representative of the sun and entitled to some sort of divine honors.

- “they did not rebel” – This is probably referring to Moses and Aaron.

105:30 – “the chambers of the kings” – God plagued Pharaoh in his bed-chamber. It may be because He would show that His judgments can penetrate the greatest privacy.

- 105:31 – “lice” – Josephus says that the plague of lice assumed the form of a disease, being “in the people.” (Exod. 8:17) He writes, “The bodies of the people bred them, and they were all covered over with them, gnawing and tearing intolerably, and no remedy, for baths and ointments did no good.”
- 105:32 – “flaming fire” – They were terrified by the mighty rumblings that accompanied the fire upon the ground. (Exod. 9:23)
- 105:33 – “vines” – Bible critics used to mock the Scriptures at this point saying there were no vineyards in Egypt. But in just the last century, archeologists have found vines in Egypt.
- 105:37 – “with silver and gold” – When God calls His people to a long journey, He fits them for it.
- “none feeble” – This is miraculous in a crowd of 2-3 million people.
 - See the contrast between Egypt and Israel; in Egypt one dead in every house, and among the Israelites not one so much as limping.
- 105:39 – “cloud for a covering, And fire to give light” – Providing shade by day and heat and light by night.
- In all desert experiences, when led by God, we can find His presence a shade and covering.
- 105:40 – “bread of heaven” – 16 tons of manna daily to feed 2-3 million people.
- 105:41 – “opened the rock” – God used the miraculous to keep His promise to Abraham.
- From most unlikely sources, the all-sufficient God can supply His people’s needs.
- 105:43 – “gladness” – At the end of every promise of God is gladness.
- 105:44 – “inherited the labor of the nations” – They lived in houses they did not build and ate from vines they did not plant.

Chapter 106:

Psalm 106 – A Psalm of Human Failure in the History of God’s People.

- Whereas Psalm 105 is a meditation on the covenant as performed on the part of God, Psalm 106 is on the covenant as kept by Israel.
 - This psalm turns on the “Nevertheless” of v. 44.
 - This psalm may have been written by David, as its first and last two verses are to be found in that sacred song which David delivered to Asaph when he brought up the ark of the Lord (1 Chron. 16:34-36).
- 106:1 – “Praise the Lord!” – This is the first psalm to begin and end with this “hallelujah.”
- “His mercy endures forever” – God’s mercy is a theme of this psalm.
 - That alone is a true and full confession of the divine goodness which is made not only in prosperity but also in adversity.
 - “mercy” – That is God not giving us what we deserve.
 - Grace is God giving us the good that we do not deserve.
- 106:3 – “he who does righteousness” – Thanks-doing is the proof of thanksgiving.

- 106:4 – “Your salvation” – This offers an interesting picture of the atonement of God to cover the sins of His people.
- 106:6 – “We have sinned” – A psalm of repentance.
- If there is any hope of or God’s salvation (v. 4) or of a true revival of God (v. 47), it will be preceded by genuine repentance and brokenness.
 - Thus is the confession of sins repeated three times.
 - “We” – The author identifies himself with Israel in her rebellion.
 - “sinned with our fathers” – Antiquity is no infallible argument of goodness. (Acts 8:51)
- 106:7 – “did not understand Your wonders” – The plagues of Egypt were not only ways to destroy Egypt, but messages to Israel concerning God’s power over other gods and concerning His Passover work for His people.
- The Israelites saw the miraculous plagues and ignorantly wondered at them.
 - “rebelled by the sea” – They rebelled by complaining against Moses and God. (Exod. 14)
- 106:9 – “the depths” – This cannot be talking about the Reed Sea.
- “through the wilderness” – They made an 11-day journey take 40 years.
 - There are great lessons in the wilderness. (Deut. 8:2-5)
- 106:11 – “waters covered their enemies” – The Lord does nothing by halves. This, again, made Israel’s sin the greater, because they saw the thoroughness of the divine justice and the perfection of the divine faithfulness.
- “not one of them left” – In the covering of their enemies, we have a type of the pardon of our sins.
- 106:12 – “Then they believed His words” – If only they would have trusted before the contest as they did after the victory, it might have kept them from rebelling.
- “sang His praise” – We see that song in Exod. 15.
- 106:13 – “They soon forgot His works” – Three days after the Red Sea, they were complaining of the bitter water. (Exod. 15:22-24)
- “forgot” – The Hebrew for “forget” conveys the idea of “having left something aside.”
 - Not remembering God’s mercies and provoking God seem to go together.
 - Each trial brings a whole new set of doubts and struggles.
- 106:14 – “lusted exceedingly” – At Kibroth Hattaavah, they cried for meat to eat. (Num. 11)
- 106:15 – “He gave them their request” – They ate until it came out their nostrils.
- That God gives a man his desire is no proof that he is the object of Divine favor; everything depends upon what that desire is.
 - “leanness into their soul” – The end of satisfied lust is a lean soul.
 - You cannot satisfy a spiritual need with a physical object.
- 106:16 – “envied Moses” – Through envy and selfish ambition, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram attempted to take the authority of Moses to themselves. (Num. 16)
- Who can hope to escape envy when the meekest of men was subject to it? (Num. 12:3)
 - The idolatry of self is compared to the idolatry of the golden calf in v. 19.

- 106:19 – “changed their glory” – Claiming the golden calf to be Yahweh. (Exod. 32)
- “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image make like corruptible man.” (Rom. 1:22-23)
 - To renounce the glory of spiritual worship for outward pomp and show is the height of folly and deserves to be treated as such.
 - They turned to the golden calf while Moses was on the top of Sinai receiving the 10 Commandments.
- 106:21 – “forgot God” – They forgot by turning God into something that He is not.
- 106:22 – “the land of Ham” – Ham was the father of Mizraim, the founder of Egypt.
- 106:23 – “Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach” – Moses’ intercession on behalf of God’s people is a picture of the work of Christ on our behalf.
- 106:24 – “despised the pleasant land” – This refers to Israel refusing to enter Canaan because of the giants that were then in the land. (Num. 14)
- “did not believe His word” – This is the root sin. If we do not believe the Lord’s word, we shall think lightly of His promised gifts.
- 106:28 – “Baal of Peor” – The worshipping idols through sexual immorality was introduced through the deception of Balaam. (Num. 25)
- 106:30 – “Phinehas stood up and intervened” – He killed sexual immorality in the camp.
- Phinehas’ honest spirit could not endure that lewdness should be publicly practiced at a time when a fast had been proclaimed.
 - The man Phinehas executed (Zimri) was a leader in the nation.
 - “Phinehas” – His name means “to scatter the serpent.”
 - It was said of Phinehas that “He was zealous for his God.” (Num. 25:13)
- 106:32 – “waters of strife” – Meribah. (Num. 20)
- “it went ill with Moses” – Moses disobeyed God in his anger at the people.
 - Moses is kept out of the promised land because he misrepresented God.
 - When anyone has run long and run well, how sad it is to stumble within a few steps of the goal.
 - It was their sin which angered him, but he had to bear the consequences.
- 106:33 – “spoke rashly” – Moses yelled at the Israelites instead of speaking to the rock.
- It was the sin of Moses, the Lord’s chosen servant, who had seen and known so much of the Lord, and therefore it could not be passed by.
- 106:35 – “mingled with the Gentiles” – This happened when Israel was living in the promised land.
- We are called to be in the world, but not of the world. (John 17:16-18)
- 106:37 – “sacrificed their sons and their daughters” – Compromise costs kids.
- “demons” – The spiritual force behind idol worship.

106:38 – “innocent blood” – Some of the kings and other people of Israel and Judah made their “sons to pass through the fire,” sacrificing their children to Molech.
- The promised land, the Holy Land, which was the glory of all lands for God was there, was defiled with the reeking gore of innocent babes.

106:39 – “played the harlot” – This they did instead of bringing the judgment on the Canaanites as they were told to do.

106:43 – “brought low” – The idea is “impoverished, or brought to poverty.”
- “for their iniquity” – Their punishment was due to their own compromise and sin.

106:44 – “Nevertheless” – The psalm turns to God’s mercy at this word.

106:45 – “for their sake” – God’s covenant is for our good.
- “His covenant” – The promise He made to Abraham in Genesis 15.
- God’s covenant was based on God’s faithfulness.

106:46 – “made them to be pitied” – God gave them favor among the nations who held them captive.

106:47 – “Save us” – This can only be said with confidence after true repentance. (v. 6)

106:48 – “God of Israel” – We serve a Jewish God.

Chapter 107:

107:1 – “He is good” – The theme of this psalm.
- Our circumstances can challenge the notion of God’s goodness.

107:2 – “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so” – Simply telling others what God has done for us.

107:4 – “They found no city” – Abraham “waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb. 11:10)
- This is true of Israel nationally and true of each of us personally.
- Our satisfaction isn’t found in location, but in relationship. We were made for heaven and relationship with God there.

107:6 – “in their trouble” – It is amazing that God would listen to them then. The Lord doesn’t seem to mind answering this prayer as long as people turn to Him.
- Some men will never pray until they are half-starved, and for their best interests it is far better for them to be empty and faint than to be full and stout-hearted.

107:7 – “the right way” – This is the only way God leads.
- There are many wrong ways, but only one right one.
- “a dwelling place” – Home. This is not a city of visitation, but a city of habitation. This conveys the idea of repose.

- 107:8 – “that men would give thanks to the Lord...for His wonderful works” – Repeated 4 times in this psalm. (v. 8, 15, 21, 31)
- “give thanks to the Lord” – The idea in the Hebrew is “confess it to the Lord.”
- 107:9 – “He satisfies the longing soul” – “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6)
- 107:10 – “darkness” – Spiritual darkness.
- Satan has blinded the eyes of those who do not believe. (2 Cor. 4:4)
- 107:12 – “brought down their heart with labor” – Their lives became heavy.
- In contrast to the obstinate and stubborn, God can work with a broken heart.
- 107:13 – “He saved them” – God’s mercy endures even to the rebellious when they turn to Him.
- 107:16 – “bronze” – This is a picture of judgment throughout the Scriptures.
- 107:17 – “Fools” – Those who say in their heart that there is no god and cannot receive instruction. (Ps. 14:1; Prov. 1:7)
- There is nothing more foolish than an act of wickedness; there is no wisdom equal to that of obeying God.
 - “because of their transgression” – These difficulties are self-inflicted, caused by their own sin.
 - God’s mercy to the fool is to allow great pain and suffering.
- 107:18 – “abhorred all manner of food” – The best of creature-comforts are but vain comforts.
- “drew near to the gates of death” – That is by the hand of God.
- 107:20 – “His word” – That is equal to the Second Person in the Godhead, our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14)
- “destructions” – Plural.
- 107:23 – “business” – They are venturing out to succeed in business.
- 107:28 – “they cry out to the Lord in their trouble” – The prodigal son was very high and resolved never to return until brought low by pinching and nipping afflictions; then his father has some tidings for him. Hagar was proud in Abraham’s house but humbled in the wilderness. Jonah was asleep on the ship, but awake at prayer in the whale’s belly. Manasseh lived in Jerusalem like a libertine, but when bound in chains in Babylon, his heart was turned to the Lord. Corporeal diseases forced many under the gospel to come to Christ, whereas others that enjoyed bodily health would not acknowledge Him.
- One would think that the Lord would abhor to hear those prayers that are made only out of the fear of danger and not out of the love, reality, and sincerity of the heart. If there had not been so many miseries of blindness, lameness, palsies, and fevers, there would not have been that flocking after Him.
- 107:30 – “their desired haven” – The rougher the voyage, the more the mariners long for port, and heaven becomes more and more a desired haven as our trials multiply.

107:33 – “watersprings into dry ground” – God will not allow us to trust our stuff.

- Sometimes, God makes things worse before they get better.
- Paul knew “how to be abased, and...how to abound.” (Phil. 4:12)

107:40 – “contempt on princes” – God will not allow them to be content with position and power.

- The kings and great men of the earth will cry out for the mountains and rocks of the earth to fall on them. (Rev. 6:16)

107:42 – “the righteous see it and rejoice” – This is the way God sets His people on high, instructing them in the mysteries of His Word and giving them to partake the joys that are contained therein.

107:43 – “the lovingkindness of the Lord” – God’s kindness will not allow us to settle for second best; which is anything less than Himself.

- God uses our trials and our struggles, even those resulting from our sins and mistakes, for our benefit by using them to draw us to Himself.
- “The goodness of God leads you to repentance.” (Rom. 2:4)

Chapter 108:

Ps. 108 – A compilation of two other psalms. Vv. 1-6 are from Ps. 57:7-11 and vv. 7-13 are from Ps. 60:6-12. God takes the high point of each previous song and compiles them to make one new song.

- Vv. 1-6 deal with relationship with God.
- Vv. 7-13 deal with the deliverance from circumstances.

108:1 – “my heart is steadfast” – This was written by David at Adullam. Even at that difficult time, David determines within himself to trust the Lord.

- So should a Christian be able, amidst changing scenes and changing fortunes, to say, “O God, my heart is fixed on You.”
- God had to get David alone to make him the king that God had anointed him to be.

108:2 – “I will awaken the dawn” – The dawn wakes other kings, but David awakens the dawn.

108:5 – “Your glory above all the earth” – David had none of the exclusiveness of the modern Jew or the narrow-heartedness of some nominal Christians. For God’s sake, that His glory might be everywhere revealed, he longed to see heaven and earth full of the divine praise.

108:6 – “Your beloved” – Good thing to remember at difficult times.

108:8 – “Gilead is Mine” – God is taking Israel unto Himself.

- “Be God’s” – Rich Mullins.

108:9 – “Moab is My washpot” – We ought never to fear those who are defending the wrong side, for since God is not with them their wisdom is folly, their strength is weakness, and their glory is their shame.

- Moab, who had enticed Israel to impurity, is made a vessel for its purifying. Edom, descendent of him who despised his birthright, is deprived of his independence, for “flinging a shoe” was a sign of the transference of a prior claim on land (Ruth 4:7).

108:10 – “lead me to Edom” – This may be prophetic, looking to the time when Israel will flee to Petra to escape the antichrist. (Isa. 16:1-5; Rev. 12:1-6)

108:11 – “who cast us off” – This is grand faith which can trust the Lord even when He seems to have cast us off.

108:12 – “the help of man is useless” – He who would have God’s help in any business must quit confidence in man’s help.

Chapter 109:

Psalm 109 – Theme: The Betrayal of the Son of Man.

- This is an imprecatory psalm, asking God’s vengeance on his enemies.
- Anger against sin and a desire that evildoers may be punished are not opposed to the spirit of the gospel or to the love of enemies which our Lord both enjoined and exemplified. If the emotion of its utterance were essentially sinful, how could Paul wish the enemy of Christ and the perverter of the gospel to be accursed; and especially, how could the spirit of the martyred saints in heaven call on God for vengeance and join to celebrate its final execution?
- Jesus Himself “looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts” (Mark 3:5) and on the great day of His wrath He will say to all the workers of iniquity, “Depart from Me, you cursed” (Matt. 25:41).

109:2 – “They have spoken against me” – The misery caused to a good man by slanderous reports no heart can imagine but that which is wounded by them.

109:4 – “In return for my love” – Betrayal.

- “But I give myself to prayer” – He is not giving himself to vengeance.
- “Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.” (Luke 6:28)
- “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.” (2 Cor. 10:4)
- The law of holiness requires us to pray for the fires of divine retribution; the law of love to seek meanwhile to rescue the brand from the burning.
- True bravery alone can teach a man to leave his traducers unanswered and carry the case to the Lord. Men cannot help but reverence the courage that walks amid calumnies un-answering.
- Persecuted saints are men of prayer.

109:5 – “rewarded me evil for good” – There is a fellowship of His sufferings that we experience in betrayals.

- Love requires vulnerability.

109:6 – “set a wicked man over him” – What worse punishment could a man have? The proud man cannot endure to be governed by the proud.

109:7 – “prayer becomes sin” – This happens when the prayer is hypocritical and empty.

- It is sin already; let it be so treated. To the injured, it must seem terrible that the black-hearted villain should nevertheless pretend to pray.
- Any time our heart kicks against the terrors of the Lord, we take it as a proof of our need of greater humbling, and confess our sin before our God.

- 109:8 – “another take his office” – Quoted by Peter of Judas in Acts 1:20.
- 109:11 – “strangers plunder his labor” – Wealth amassed by oppression has seldom lasted to the third generation.
- Judas eventually gave all the money back that he had attained by betraying Jesus.
- 109:14 – “iniquity of his fathers” – As a matter of fact, children do suffer upon their parents sins and are often themselves the means of such punishment. (Matt. 27:25)
- The passage is dark, and we must leave it so.
 - “the sin of his mother” – David is even referring to this man’s momma.
- 109:16 – “slay the broken in heart” – He had malice in his heart toward one who was already sufficiently sorrowful.
- 109:17 – “did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him” – To invoke blessings on such a man would be to participate in his wickedness; therefore, let blessing be far from him, so long as he continues what he now is.
- 109:18 – “let it enter his body like water” – David is asking God to allow this man to reap what he has sown. He is calling for justice, and justice must always go before mercy.
- The basis of grace is not niceness, but satisfied justice. God must still be just, or else His grace doesn’t mean anything.
 - Vengeance is the prerogative of God, and it would be a boundless calamity if evil were forever to go unpunished.
- 109:21 – “But You, O God” – How eagerly he turns from his enemies to his God.
- “for Your name’s sake” – His plea is not his own merit, but the Name.
 - David’s actions differ from theirs because he is concerned for His name’s sake.
 - “mercy is good” – David wants justice for them, but vengeance for himself.
 - Not because I am good, but because Your mercy is good.
- 109:24 – “fasting” – David has afflicted his soul before God.
- 109:25 – “shake their heads” – They did that to Jesus. (Matt. 27:39)

Chapter 110:

Psalm 110 – “Psalm of the Messianic Priest-King.”

- Most frequently quoted psalm in the NT. V. 1 is quoted or referred to at least 25 times in the NT; v. 4 at least 5 times.
- The priest-king Messiah is also referred to in Zech. 6:13.

110:1 – “The LORD said unto my Lord” – How greatly should we prize the revelation of God’s private and solemn discourse with the Son.

- “The LORD” – Jehovah.
- “my Lord” – Adonai.
 - Jesus quotes this verse in Matt. 22:44 to reveal Himself as the Son of David, and yet also David’s Lord. Jesus is the root and offspring of David.
- “Sit at My right hand” – This is where Jesus currently makes intercession for the saints.
 - Let us never fear as to the future. While we see our Lord and Representative sitting in quiet expectancy, we, too, may sit in the attitude of peaceful assurance and with confidence await the grand outcome of all events.
- “Your enemies Your footstool” – Putting His feet on the neck of His defeated enemies. (Heb. 1:13)
 - This putting of Christ’s enemies as a stool under His feet also denotes unto us two things in reference to Christ: first, His rest, and secondly, His triumph. To stand, in the Scriptures phrase, denotes ministry, and to sit, rest; and there is no posture so easy as to sit with a stool under one’s feet. Till Christ’s enemies be all under His feet, He is fully in His rest.
 - Currently, His enemies trample upon Christ in His Word, in His ways, and in His members.

110:2 – “the rod of Your strength” – The cross is the rod of His power.

- “out of Zion” – The Church itself was birthed in Jerusalem.

110:3 – “volunteers” – Willfully serving God denotes the beautiful condition of creatures who permit themselves to be wrought upon and move according to the will of God. This is a result of spiritual health and life.

- Volunteers must please the Lord more than recruits and draftees. God doesn’t force anyone to follow Him.
- Someday God will pour out the spirit of grace and supplication on His people, Israel. (Zech. 12:10)

- 110:4 – “The Lord has sworn” – Our Lord Jesus is a Priest-King by the ancient oath of Jehovah.
- God has sworn His Son a priest forever, to sanctify our persons, purge our sins, and tender all our petitions to His Father.
 - “a priest forever” – Other priests were appointed by men for the service of God, but He was appointed by God for the service and salvation of men. Other priests spilt the blood of beasts to save men, but He shed His own blood. Other priests offered sacrifices for themselves, He offered Himself for a sacrifice. Other priests were fed by the sacrifices which the people brought, but He feeds us with the sacrifice of His own body and blood. Other priests were appointed for a time, but He was ordained a priest forever.
 - “the order of Melchizedek” – Heb. 7:17 quotes this verse to reveal that Christ’s priesthood is not a Jewish or Levitical operation, but of a new order altogether.
 - Jesus could not be of the order of Aaron or Levi, because they had fallen into sin and their priesthood ended at death.
 - “Melchizedek” – He was the king of Salem and ministered to Abraham after his battle for Lot in Gen. 14:18. Abraham paid him a tenth of the spoils from the battle.
 - Melchizedek’s office was exceptional: none preceded or succeeded him; he comes upon the page of history mysteriously; no pedigree is given, no date of birth, or mention of death; he blesses Abraham, receives tithes, and vanishes from the scene amid honors which show that he was greater than the founder of the chosen nation. He is seen but once, and that once suffices. Aaron and his seed came and went; their imperfect sacrifice continued for many generations, because it had no finality in it and could never make the comers thereunto perfect. Our Lord Jesus, like Melchizedek, stands forth before us as a Priest of divine ordaining; not made a priest by fleshly birth, as the sons of Aaron; He mentions neither father, mother, nor descent, as His right to the sacred office; He stands upon His personal merits, by Himself alone; as no man came before Him in His work, so none can follow after; His order begins and ends in His own person, and in Himself it is eternal, “having neither beginning of days nor ending of years.” (Heb. 7:3) The King-Priest has been here and left His blessing upon the believing seed, and now sits in glory in His complete character, atoning for us by the merit of His blood and exercising all power on our behalf.

110:5 – “The Lord is at Your right hand” – “We have such a Lord, Who not only delivers us from sin and eternal death, but also protects us and delivers us in sufferings and temptations” – Martin Luther.

- “He shall execute kings” – This will happen at the Battle of Armageddon.

110:7 – “drink of the brook” – This is a picture of a time of refreshing after the great battle.

- This brook could possibly be the river that flows from the Temple in the Millennial Age.

Chapter 111:

Psalm 111 – “The Psalm of God’s Works.”

- “works” – v. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7.

- Both psalms 111 and 112 are acrostics with each line beginning with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

111:1 – “I will praise” – Preaching, if it is to carry weight and conviction, must be backed and exemplified by our conduct. We need never expect to persuade others by arguments which are too weak to influence ourselves.

- “my whole heart” – Jesus called them hypocrites who would acknowledge Him with their mouths, but have their hearts far from Him. (Matt. 15:18)
- Men are ever attempting to unite what the Word of God has declared to be incapable of union, the love of the world and the love of God; to give half their heart to the world and the other half to God.

111:2 – “works of the Lord...studied” – All His works, past, present and future.

- The psalmist dwells upon the idea that God should be known by His people, and that this knowledge when turned into practical piety is man’s true wisdom.

111:3 – “honorable and glorious” – This is the only kind of work God does.

- Eph. 2:10 speaks of the believer as the workmanship of God.

111:4 – “to be remembered” – In the feasts (Passover, Tabernacles, and Trumpets), in memorials (at the Jordan River), in Communion, and in baptism.

111:6 – “the heritage of the nations” – As God gathers Israel back to the land.

111:7 – “the works of His hands are verity” – The works of God expound His Word. God acts out what He says.

- “verity” – Truth.

111:9 – “He has sent redemption” – This He did in Jesus.

- “commanded His covenant forever” – His eternal work for us is independent of our feelings, but instead based on His promise.
- “awesome” – KJV translates this “reverend.”

111:10 – “wisdom” – It is not any mere amount of knowledge that constitutes wisdom.

- “do His commandments” – Godly fear will be matched by obedience.
 - Practical godliness is the test of wisdom. The best proof of intelligence must be found in actually doing the will of the Lord.

Chapter 112:

Psalm 112 – “The Psalm of Good Works.”

112:1 – “Blessed is the man” – The fear of the Lord casts out all other fears.

- “fears the Lord” – This picks up on the theme of Psalm 111:10.

112:2 – “His descendants” – There is a blessing for this man’s descendants.

- “the upright will be blessed” – The godly may be persecuted, but they shall not be forsaken.

112:3 – “Wealth and riches will be in his house” – They may not come until the promised future.

112:4 – “light in the darkness” – The darkest of days causes the light to shine brighter.

- “gracious, and full of compassion” – Just like God Himself. (Ps. 111:4)

112:5 – “A good man...lends” – God makes us givers rather than takers.

- “guide his affairs with discretion” – Idolatry and darkness is often followed by poverty.
 - An ounce of discretion is said to be worth a pound of learning. As zeal without knowledge is blind, so knowledge without discretion is lame, like a sword in a madman’s hand.

112:7 – “not be afraid” – This is important in troublesome times.

- “But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled.” (Mark 13:7)
- “evil tidings” – They are all over the newspaper.
- “heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord” – Steadfast and trust go together.

112:8 – “not be afraid” – Faith can overcome fear.

112:9 – “given to the poor” – Quoted by Paul in 2 Cor. 9:9 referring to people giving to God and others what God has already first given to them.

112:10 – “desire of the wicked shall perish” – God will distinguish between the righteous and the wicked someday.

- The sight of Christ in glory with His saints will, in an inexpressible manner, torment the crucifiers of the One and the persecutors of the other; as it will show them the hopes and wishes of their adversaries all granted to the full, and all their own desires and designs forever at an end. (Zech. 12:10)

Psalms 113-118 are the “Egyptian Hallel” psalms sung at the Passover meal. Psalms 113-114 sung before the meal; psalms 115-118 after the meal.

- Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26 – “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

Chapter 113:

Psalm 113 – “Praising God for His Might and Humility.”

113:1 – “Praise” – 3 times in the first verse.

- We are all too dull and slow in considering and praising the blessings of God.

113:2 – “Blessed be the name of the Lord” – By mentioning the name, the psalmist would teach us to bless each of the attributes of the Most High, accepting Him as we find Him revealed in the inspired Word and by His own acts, and loving and praising Him as such.

- “From this time forth and forevermore” – In the book of Revelation, we see God being praised forevermore.

113:4 – “The Lord is high” – The power and majesty of God.

113:5 – “Who is like?” – It is a rhetorical question. The obvious answer is, “no one.”

- It is the nature of love that the One whom we love we prefer to all others.

113:6 – “Who humbles Himself” – The humility of an all-powerful God.

- He humbled Himself to become a man and to taste death on the cross. (Phil. 2:5-8)
- Jesus would sing this at the Last Supper. To see the adorable Spirit of God, with infinite long-suffering and gentleness, submitting to the contempt and insults of such miserable, despicable wretches as sinful mortals are.
- “things that are in the heavens” – He dwells so far on high that even to observe heavenly things He must humble Himself.

113:7 – “He raises the poor” – Nearly the exact words prayed by Hannah in 1 Sam. 2:8.

- Gideon is fetched from threshing, Saul from seeking the donkeys, and David from keeping the sheep; the Apostles from fishing are sent to be “fishers of men.” The treasure of the gospel is put into earthen vessels, and the weak and the foolish ones of the world pitched upon to be preachers of it, to confound the “wise and mighty” (1 Cor. 1:27-28), that the excellency of the power may be of God, and all may see that promotion comes from Him.
- “lifts the needy out of the ash heap” – Whereon they lay like worthless refuse, cast off and cast out, left as they thought to rot into destruction, and to be everlastingly forgotten. How great a stoop from the height of His throne to a dunghill!
- God looks down from His majestic throne upon you!

113:9 – “the barren woman” – God stoops to fellowship in the suffering of the barren.

- The strong desire of the Easterners to have children caused the birth of offspring to be hailed as the choicest of favors; hence this verse is placed last as if to crown the whole.
- Each believer in the Lord Jesus must at times have mourned his lamentable barrenness.

Chapter 114:

Ps. 114 – “Praising God for His Deliverance.”

- On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah speak with Jesus about the “exodus” He is about to accomplish.

114:1 – “went out of Egypt” – God’s Passover deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

114:2 – “Judah” – Jesus would come from the tribe of Judah.

- The whole people were the shrine of Deity, and their camp was one great temple.

114:3 – “sea saw it and fled” – Nature acknowledged God’s power.

- The God of Jacob is exalted as having command over river, sea, and mountains, and causing all nature to pay homage and tribute before His glorious majesty.
- During the triumphal entry, Jesus said if the people would keep silent then the rocks would cry out. (Luke 19:40)
- “The sea...Jordan” – The division of the sea and the drying up of the river are placed together though forty years intervened, because they were the opening and closing scenes of one great event.
- “Jordan turned back” – At any time the passage of the river by such a multitude, with their women and children, their flocks and herds, and all their baggage, would have presented formidable difficulties; but now the channel was filled with a deep and impetuous torrent, which overflowed its banks and spread widely on each side, probably extending nearly a mile in width; while in the very sight of the scene were the Canaanitish hosts, who might be expected to pour out from their gates, and exterminate the invading multitude before they could reach the shore. Yet these difficulties were nothing to Almighty Power and only served to heighten the effect of the stupendous miracle about to be wrought.

114:4 – “mountains skipped” – When God spoke the Law from Sinai, the mountain shook and all 2-3 million people feared the voice of the Lord.

- There are many mountains in the soul of a sinner, as pride, unbelief, self-conceitedness, atheism, profaneness, etc.

114:7 – “Tremble” – Hebrew, “be in pain,” as a travailing woman.

114:8 – “the rock into a pool of water” – The rock that followed them through the wilderness was Christ (1 Cor. 10:4) and on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus spoke up and said “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.” (John 7:37)

Chapter 115:

Ps. 115 – “Praising God’s Superiority over Idols.”

115:1 – “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us” – The psalmist, by this repetition, implies our natural tendency to self-idolatry, and to magnifying of ourselves, and the difficulty of cleansing our hearts from the self-reflections.

- “to Your name give glory” – “We are never more like Satan than when we touch the glory” – Billy Graham.
- All our service is as “unprofitable servants.” (Luke 17:10)

115:2 – “the Gentiles say, ‘So where is their God?’” – Christ is foolishness to the Gentile. Coming as a baby is too humble for the Gentile mind.

- The psalmist is evidently indignant that the worshippers of foolish idols should be able to put such a taunting question to the people who worshipped the only living and true God.
- When Israel marched into Canaan, a terror was upon all the people round about, because of Jehovah, the mighty God; but this dread the nations had shaken off since there had been of late no remarkable display of miraculous power.

115:3 – “God is in heaven” – He is unaffected by our doubt.

- “He does whatever He pleases” – He is sovereign...and He is good.

115:4 – “Their idols” – In contrast to “our God” in v. 3.

- The single-most dominating think of your life is your God.
- Man has an innate desire to worship deity. But when humans make their gods, they 1) make their gods like themselves, 2) actually make their gods less than themselves, and 3) then they become like their gods.
- Mammon was the worship of money; Bacchus, alcohol and drugs; Ashtoreth, sex and pleasure; Molech, freedom and prosperity through child sacrifice; Baal, financial prosperity through the harvest.
- Idolaters plead in behalf of their idols, that they are only intended to represent their gods, and to maintain a more abiding sense of their presence. But the gods they profess to represent do not really exist, and therefore their worship is altogether vain and foolish.
- “silver and gold” – Mammon; money.

115:5 – “but the do not see” – He must be very blind who worships a blind god.

- Even the pagans were disgusted with gods who did not defend themselves.

115:8 – “those who make them are like them” – Blind, deaf, and dumb...like those idols.

- Life becomes empty and meaningless before these vain gods. No truth or conviction, no direction or perspective, not able to handle tough situations, not able to hear, etc.
- Isaiah 44:9-20 details the folly of trusting idols.
- The prodigal son had to come to his senses before returning home. In turning to the world, he had lost his senses.
- As a believer, you become like how you see God to be.

115:9-11 – “trust in the Lord” – Repeated three times.

- Our God can defend us and Himself at the same time.

115:16 – “the earth He has given to the children of men” – Adam was given the responsibility to tend the garden and keep it. (Gen. 2:15) Instead he lost it through sin leaving it under the temporary authority of Satan.

115:17 – “dead do not praise the Lord” – Jesus will sing this hours before His death.

- “into silence” – Jesus bore the wrath of the Father in 3 hours of darkness on the cross.

Chapter 116:

Ps. 116 – “Praising God for Deliverance from Death.”

116:1 – “I love the Lord” – Personal love is fostered by a personal experience of redemption.

- “supplications” – He prayed for the problem described in v. 3-4.

116:2 – “inclined His ear” – It is the picture of God stooping down to listen.

- “Therefore I will call upon Him” – It is love that does open our mouths, that we may praise with joyful lips.
- “I will” – This is the psalmist’s response to God’s answered prayer.
 - “I will” is repeated 6 times in this psalm: v. 2, 9, 13, 14, 17, and 18.

- 116:3 – “pains” – Lit. “cords.”
- “surrounded” – or “entangled.”
 - “laid hold of me” – When God sends out troubles and afflictions as officers to attach any man, they will find him, and finding him, they will take hold of him.
 - “trouble and sorrow” – He was in distress.
- 116:4 – “Lord, I implore You” – Real trouble produces real prayer.
- 116:5 – “Gracious is the Lord” – This is a foundational understanding of God.
- 116:6 – “simple” – This implies “pure, or without guile.”
- They who seem to have least cause to trust on God have most cause to trust on Him. (1 Cor. 1:26-29)
 - We suppose there are many truths to be apprehended, many principles to be realized before we can be saved. No; “the Lord preserves the simple.”
 - Ezek. 45 – “for him that is simple.”
 - “brought low” – The Hebrew literally means “to hang down, to be pendulous, to swing, to wave.” The context implies “to be slack, feeble, weak as in sickness.”
- 116:7 – “Return to your rest, O my soul” – Whenever a child of God, even for a moment, loses his peace of mind, he should be concerned to find it again, not by seeking it in the world or in his own experience, but in the Lord alone. (Matt. 11:28)
- “my soul” – That goes deeper than the physical frame.
- 116:8 – “soul...eyes...feet” – The three areas of God’s deliverance.
- 116:9 – “I will walk before the Lord” – Justification can never be without sanctification. Peace of conscience and godliness of life can never be one without the other.
- Notice how David does not say, “I shall satiate myself with delights in my royal city,” but “I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”
 - “before the Lord” – In His presence.
- 116:10 – “I believed, therefore I spoke” – Quoted by Paul in 2 Cor. 4:13.
- We move others to believe nothing but what we believe, and are fully assured of ourselves.
- 116:11 – “in my haste” – “Hasty thoughts are best kept as thoughts” – Damian Kyle.
- “all men are liars” – The idea is “you can’t trust anyone.”
 - If every man be a liar, then David was a liar. When the psalmist spoke he did so not as a man, but from an inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- 116:13 – “take up the cup of salvation” – This is how the psalmist decides to repay God for His goodness in answering his prayer.
- Jesus took the cup of God’s wrath so we could take the cup of His salvation.
- 116:15 – “Precious in the sight of the Lord” – As God welcomes another child home.
- The death of Christ makes a believer’s death a passage to heaven.
 - His saints shall no die prematurely; they shall be immortal till their work is done, and when their time shall come to die, then their deaths shall be precious.
 - The church often learns much at the death-bed of a believer.

116:16 – “I am Your servant” – He surrenders His life to the Lord.

- Paul considered himself a bondservant of Jesus Christ.
- Do not think that you honor God in serving Him; but this is how God honors you, in allowing you to be His servant.
- “You have loosed my bonds” – Great mercies should engage to great obedience.

Chapter 117:

Ps. 117 – “Psalm of the Gentiles’ Praise.”

- This is the shortest psalm in the book of Psalms and the shortest chapter in the Bible.

117:1 – “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles” – Quoted by Paul in Rom. 15:11 to validate his calling to minister the gospel to the Gentiles.

- “Gentiles” – God’s merciful kindness in Jesus extends to Gentiles.
 - Beyond all bounds of race or nationality, it calls upon all mankind to praise the name of the Lord.
 - This would be an interesting psalm for Israel to sing on the Passover.

117:2 – “merciful kindness is great” – He loves with a deep and heavy love.

- “great” – That word can also be translated “strong.”

Chapter 118:

Ps. 118 – “Praising God for His Salvation.”

- This psalm is quoted at least 10 times in the NT.

118:1 – “give thanks to the Lord” – This is a call to worship.

- “mercy” – This worship is a response to the goodness and mercy of God.
- “mercy endures forever” – This is repeated because in temptations and dangers, the flesh can begin to doubt the mercy of God.

118:2 – “now” – God is most concerned with the present. (Exod. 3:14)

118:3 – “house of Aaron” – The priesthood.

118:5 – “in distress” – or “out of anguish.”

- Prayers which come out of distress generally come out of the heart.

118:6 – “The Lord is on my side” – Yet we often think that God is ready to strike us, like He is out to get us and crush us.

- “What can man do to me?” – Man will crucify Him.

- 118:8 – “It is better to trust in the Lord” – All make acknowledgment, and yet there is scarcely one among a hundred who is fully persuaded that God alone can afford him sufficient help. That man has attained a high rank among the faithful, who resting satisfied in God, never ceases to entertain a lively hope, even when he finds no help upon the earth.
- “trust in the Lord” – Biblically, to trust is “to believe, have faith in, or rely upon.”
 - This is the middle verse of the Bible. There are 31,174 verses in all and this is the 15,587th.
 - “confidence in man” – In many troubles, they cannot help us in the least degree.
 - David knew that by experience, for he confided in Saul his king, Achish the Philistine, and Ahithophel his most trusted advisor, and they all failed him.
- 118:9 – “princes” – Civil leaders and politicians.
- 118:10-12 – “I will destroy” – This phrase is repeated 3 times in these three verses.
- He did not sit supinely and leave work to be done by God by some mysterious means, but he resolved with his own trusty sword to be in God’s hand the instrument of deliverance.
 - “surrounded me” – This is similar to “the great bulls of Bashan” surrounding the Messiah in Psalm 22.
- 118:14 – “He has become my salvation” – (Heb. “yeshua”) The Hebrew word for Jesus.
- “He has become” – It doesn’t say “He provided.” He didn’t just give salvation, He became it.
- 118:15-16 – “right hand of the Lord” – Repeated 3 times in two verses.
- 118:15 – “tents” – That is their homes.
- 118:16 – “right hand of the Lord does valiantly” – Looking to the resurrection, Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God the Father.
- 118:17 – “I shall not die, but live” – Jesus would have sung that before leaving the upper room and going to Gethsemane.
- According to Matthesius, Luther had Psalm 118:17 written on his study wall.
- 118:19 – “gates of righteousness” – Jesus rent the veil so we could have direct access to the presence of God.
- “Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matt. 7:14)

118:22 – “the builders rejected” – They could see no excellence in Him that they should build upon Him. He could not be made to fit in with their ideal.

- “Still do the builders refuse Him: even to this day the professional teachers of the gospel are far too apt to fly to any and every new philosophy sooner than maintain the simple gospel, which is the essence of Christ: nevertheless, He holds His true position amongst His people, and the foolish builders shall see to their utter confusion that His truth shall be exalted over all” – Charles Spurgeon.
- “chief cornerstone” – Jesus and Peter refer this verse to Jesus Himself. (Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:7)
 - Jesus is the “stumbling stone” to the religious, as they would reject Him because He doesn’t fit their system of earning their way to heaven. He is the “smiting stone” to the nation, who would not accept His authority. And He is the “chief cornerstone” to those who will measure their life off of Jesus.

118:23 – “This was the Lord’s doing” – In the Hebrew, the passage reads, “It is wonderfully done.”

- “marvelous” – or “miraculous.”
- “in our eyes” – We need His help to see His work in this world.

118:24 – “the day the Lord has made” – The day of Christ’s salvation. (Luke 19:41)

118:25 – “Save now” – The Greek is “hosanna,” spoken of Christ at the triumphal entry.

118:27 – “He has given us light” – His light descended into our darkness. (John 1:5)

- “Bind the sacrifice” – As Jesus would be bound to the cross. His cords were cords of love that looked like iron nails.
- “the sacrifice” – Jesus wasn’t just a martyr or a model, He was a sacrifice.
 - “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.” (Heb. 10:5)
 - The OT sacrifices are not well-pleasing in the sight of God, except that they were bound to the horns of the altar, so as to derive their acceptance from the altar.
- “cords” – This word carries with it the idea of wreaths and boughs, so that it was not a cord of hard, rough rope, but a decorated band.

Chapter 119:

The theme of Psalm 119 is the Word of God.

- Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible.
- 175 of the 176 verses have a specific reference to the Scriptures (only except v. 122).
- Psalm 119 is written as an acrostic, with sections of 8 verses each, with each verse starting with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
 - “Show me a Bible that is worn out and I’ll show you a Christian that isn’t” – Charles Spurgeon.
 - “All grace grows as love to the Word of God grows” – Philip Henry.

119:1-8 – These first eight verses are taken up with a contemplation of the blessedness which comes through keeping the statutes of the Lord. Heart-fellowship with God is enjoyed through a love of that Word which is God’s way of communing with the soul by His Holy Spirit.

- 119:1 – “Blessed” – The way of God’s blessing is related to the Word of God.
- Holiness is happiness.
 - “the way” – God’s provided path.
 - Law, ways, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, word, saying truth...God’s word.
 - Walk, keep, walk, keep, keep, look into, learn, keep...our response to His Word.
 - “Law” – Referring to the Torah. (Used 25 times in Psalm 119.)
- 119:2 – “keep His testimonies” – Blessedness is ascribed to those who treasure up the testimonies of the Lord, in which is implied that they search the Scriptures, that they come to an understanding of them, that they love them, and then that they continue in the practice of them.
- “testimonies” – These are specific directions. (Used 23 times in Psalm 119.)
 - “seek Him” – We study the Word of God to know the God of the Word.
- 119:3 – “iniquity” – If a man be constantly, easily, and frequently carried away to sin, it discovers the habit of his soul and the temper of his heart.
- “walk in His ways” – We must be positively as well as negatively right. The surest way to abstain from evil is to be fully occupied in doing good.
- 119:4 – “keep Your precepts diligently” – It is no use traveling fast if we are not in the right road. Men have been diligent in a losing business, and the more they have traded, the more they have lost. This is bad enough in commerce, we cannot afford to have it so in our religion.
- “precepts” – These are clearly defined injunctions. (Used 21 times in Psalm 119.)
- 119:5 – “statutes” – These are written directions, especially applying to ceremonial practice. (Used 22 times in Psalm 119.)
- 119:6 – “Then I would not be ashamed” – This implies there has been some shame to this point.
- The psalmist is admitting failure and seeking God to correct it and prevent it next time.
 - “ashamed” – God’s Word will keep us from shame. (Schwarzenegger example.)
 - “all Your commandments” – Our responsibility is in relationship to all the Word. We don’t get to pick and choose.
 - There can be no true piety except where a man intends to keep all the commandments of God. If he makes a selection among them, it is a full proof that he knows nothing of the nature of true religion.
 - “commandments” – The specific part of the Law containing the 10 Commandments. (Used 22 times in Psalm 119.)
- 119:7 – “judgments” – Decisions God makes relative to difficult circumstances. (Used 21 times in Psalm 119.)
- 119:9-16 – A prominent place – 1 out of the 22 parts – is assigned to the young men in Psalm 119.
- 119:9 – “cleanse his way” – Surrendering to the Word will bring purity to the life.
- There is never God’s blessing without God’s cleansing.
 - Jesus said, “You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you.” (John 15:3)
 - “taking heed” – With the greatest care a man will go astray if his map misleads him. But with the most accurate map, he will still lose his road if he does not take heed to it.

- 119:10 – “I have sought You” – The surest mode of cleansing the way of our life is to seek after God Himself, and to endeavor to abide in fellowship with Him.
- “let me not wander” – The Word can corral and control us.
- 119:11 – “Your word I have hidden in my heart” – You must know the Word to obey it.
- “hidden” – This saying, to hide, imports that David studied not to be ambitious to set forth himself and to make a glorious show before men, but that he had God for a witness of that secret desire which was within him.
 - “in my heart” – There is a great difference between Christians and worldlings. The worldling has his treasure in jewels without him, the Christian has them within.
 - “That I might not sin” – Bible knowledge isn’t to build our pride, but to keep us from sin.
 - “By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption [that is] in the world through lust.” (2 Pet. 1:4)
 - “Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)
 - “Washing of the water by the Word.” (Eph. 5:26)
- 119:12 – “Teach me” – In keeping the commandments of God, nothing can be done by human strength. But it is He Who must create the will for the performance of such duty. (Phil. 2:13)
- 119:13 – “I have declared” – The psalmist is not ashamed to share God’s Word.
- 119:14 – “as in all riches” – The Word is more valuable than any amount of earthly wealth.
- God has blessings for us that are not limited to the physical realm.
- 119:17-24 – Here he pleads as a servant and a pilgrim who growingly finds himself to be a stranger in an enemy’s country. His appeal is to God alone, and his prayer is specially direct and personal. He speaks with the Lord as a man speaks with his friend.
- 119:17 – “bountifully” – The psalmist is not ashamed to ask for God’s best.
- “that I may live and keep Your word” – We work for Him because He works in us.
- 119:18 – “Open my eyes” – The truths of the Scriptures are spiritually revealed. (1 Cor. 2:14) The great reason why men do not feel the power and beauty of the Bible is a spiritual one. (Eph. 4:18)
- Jesus revealed Himself through the Scriptures to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and their testimony was “did not our hearts burn...” (Luke 24:32)
 - “wondrous things” – Although the world takes the word of God to be but a light thing, yet for all that there seems such a wisdom to be in it.
- 119:19 – “stranger in the earth” – This earth is not home and it is not right.
- The things which are seen are temporal and go with time into extinction, while those things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor. 4:18)
- 119:20 – “My soul breaks” – David had such reverence for the Word and such a desire to know it and to be conformed to it that his longings caused him a sort of heartbreak.

- 119:21 – “the proud” – And if God spared not the angels, whom He placed in the highest heavens, but for their pride threw them down headlong to the nethermost hell, how much less shall He spare the proud dust and ashes of the sons of men? (2 Pet. 2:4)
- God rebukes pride even when the multitudes pay homage to it.
- 119:23 – “speak against me, but Your servant meditates on Your statutes” – Do we run to the Scriptures when reviled?
- We are going to get reviled here for being strangers in the earth.
 - “meditates on Your statutes” – Those who feed upon the Word grow strong and peaceful and are by God’s grace hidden from the strife of tongues.
 - It is impossible to live either Christianly or comfortably without the daily use of Scripture.
- 119:24 – “Your testimonies...my counselors” – The Word of God is the best counselor.
- God’s Word is accompanied by God’s power. He never gives His Word without also giving Himself. (No other counselor can grant the power and continual presence to help the person do what they told them to do.)
- 119:25-32 – The influence of the Divine Word upon a heart which laments.
- 119:25 – “Revive me” – Bringing a dying ember back into full flame.
- This phrase is used 9 times in Psalm 119, and only in this psalm. It is of great importance, as it expresses the spiritual change by which a child of Adam becomes a child of God. Its source is God and the instrument by which it is effected is the Word (v. 50).
 - “clings to the dust” – Is this illness, sin, or depression?
 - Many times are God’s children brought to this estate that they have nothing to uphold them but the Word of God.
- 119:26 – “You answered me” – The most important part of prayer is listening.
- God’s ways are not our ways. His ways are higher than our ways, so we must listen to know them. (Isa. 55:8-9)
- 119:28 – “soul” – Note how David records his inner soul-life (v. 20, 25, 81, 109, 167, 175). Some people do not even know that they have a soul.
- “melts” – Lit. “drops down.”
 - “Strengthen me” – The Word of God is not just an intellectual exercise. The Word of God is life and power. (1 Cor. 4:20)
 - Gesenius translates this, “keep me alive.”
- 119:29 – “Remove from me” – The Word will cut it out of us. (Heb. 4:12)
- He asks for sin to be removed from him, not for him to be removed from sin (the earth). We must be in the world, and yet not of it. (John 17:16-18)
 - “the way of lying” – Lying occurs 8 times in this psalm.
 - The whole life of sin is a lie from beginning to end.
- 119:31 – “cling” – Translated “am stuck” in the KJV.
- In v. 25, the psalmist “clings to the dust;” here he “clings to Your testimonies.” The thing is altogether compatible with the experience of the believer. Within there is the body of indwelling sin and within there is the undying principle of Divine grace.

- 119:32 – “enlarge my heart” – God will expand us to live according to His Word.
- It is one of the great lacks of our age that heads count for more than hearts and men are far more ready to learn than to love, though they are by no means eager to do either.
- 119:33-40 – “Your” – Used 8 times. The Word of God is intimately connected to the God of the Word.
- 2,600 times in the OT, the writers claim that what they are writing is the Word of God. And over 500 times in the NT, the writers claim that what they are writing is the Word of God.
- 119:33 – “Teach me” – This is dependent on God. (v. 38)
- Without God opening to us the Bible, it remains a closed book.
 - “to the end” – The end of which David speaks is either the end of life or the fullness of obedience, or both.
- 119:34 – “Give me understanding” – 1 John 5:20.
- 119:35 – “Make me walk” – The psalmist does not ask the Lord to do for him what he ought to do for himself. He wishes to walk in the path of the command.
- The work of a Christian lies not in depth of speculation, but in the height of practice.
- 119:36 – “Incline my heart” – Asking God to make us desire His Word.
- Our heart is more naturally drawn to other things. Covetousness.
- 119:37 – “Turn away my eyes” – Job made a covenant with his eyes. (Job 31:1) David said “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes.” (Psalm 101:3)
- Sin first entered man’s mind by the eye, and it is still a favorite gate for the incoming of Satan’s allurements.
- 119:38 – “devoted to fearing you” – We shall never be rooted and grounded in our belief unless we daily practice what we profess to believe.
- 119:41-48 – “Waw” – Due to the difficult Hebrew letter for this section, each verse begins with the Hebrew word for “and.”
- These verses are a continued pleading for the abiding of grace in the soul.
- 119:41 – “mercies” – He desires mercy as well as teaching, for he was guilty as well as ignorant.
- God’s mercy is a benefit of God’s law and Word.
 - “salvation according to Your Word” – We know of God’s mysterious salvation most clearly in His Word.
 - Here is the first mention of salvation in the psalm, and it is joined with mercy.
- 119:42 – “I have an answer for him” – A man of simple-hearted, pure piety, with no weapon but the Word of God, may often thus be better armed than if he had all the arguments of the schools as his command.
- “reproaches” – Also “to mock, or hold in contempt.”
 - These people are mocking and holding the Word of God in contempt.
- 119:44-47 – “keep...walk...speak....delight” – There is a progression here.

- 119:45 – “walk at liberty” – The Word brings freedom, contrary to what the world says.
- James 2:12 speaks of “the law of liberty.”
 - “liberty” – Lit. “a wide place.” Unconfined by affliction or oppression.
 - He who goes the beaten and right path will have no brambles hit him across the eyes.
- 119:46 – “before kings, and will not be ashamed” – The psalmist has no desire to impress people.
- Men of greatest holiness have been men of greatest boldness.
- 119:47 – “commandments which I love” – John 14:23.
- 119:48 – “My hands also I will lift up” – In surrender to God’s Word.
- 119:49 – “caused me to hope” – God’s Word can lift a heart to hope. It gives us something to hold onto.
- It would be all in vain for us if the promise were remembered to all others if it did not come true to ourselves.
- 119:50 – “comfort” – (Heb. “nechamah”) Lit. “consolation.” The name Nehemiah comes from this word. (Job 6:9)
- “in my affliction” – Not taking him out of affliction, but comforting him through it.
 - There is “hope in the comfort of the Scriptures.” (Rom. 15:4)
- 119:51 – “proud have me in great derision” – There are hosts of proud men still upon the face of the earth, and if they find a believer in affliction, they will be mean enough and cruel enough to make jests at his expense. It is the nature of the son of the bondwoman to mock the child of promise.
- “He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision.” (Ps. 2:4)
- 119:52 – “judgments of old” – God’s law is not fickle, but steady and grounded in His unchanging moral character. This is a major source of the author’s comfort and one of the main reasons he cherishes the law so highly.
- Past judgments lead to present comforts.
- 119:55 – “in the night” – All these show that he was intensely given to the Word, as we see men of the world take some part of the night for their delights.
- “I will keep Your law” – If we remember His name in the night, it will help us to keep His law during the day.
- 119:56 – “I kept Your precepts” – The Rabbins have a saying, “The reward of a precept is a precept.”
- 119:57-64 – In this section, the psalmist seems to take firm hold upon God Himself.
- 119:57-59 – “I said...I entreated...I thought” – The psalmist is making a commitment, but in reliance upon God.

- 119:57 – “You are my portion” – Jesus said that if we would keep His Word, He will love us and manifest Himself in us and to us. (John 14:23)
- Jesus is the Word of God in human flesh. (John 1) The Scriptures are the Word of God in written form. (Heb. 4) The Word of God will reveal the God of the Word.
 - Like the Levites, he took God to be his portion and left other matters to those who coveted them.
 - “keep Your words” – Realizing that God’s presence is connected with His Word makes it especially important for us to keep His Word.
- 119:59 – “thought about my ways” – As they stand in contrast to His ways.
- God’s word is a mirror. (James 1:23)
 - “thought” – Lit. “studied, or examined.”
 - “turned my feet to Your testimonies” – The great turn to be made in heart and life is from all other things to the Word of God.
- 119:60 – “did not delay” – Quick obedience is the easiest obedience.
- Today is the acceptable day of salvation. (2 Cor. 6:2)
 - “delay” – This is the word used of Lot’s lingering in Gen. 19:16.
 - Delay in the Lord’s errands is next to disobedience and generally springs out of it.
- 119:61 – “not forgotten Your law” – The ungodly could not keep God from him, nor him from God. This was because God was his portion and none could deprive him of it.
- 119:62 – “midnight” – In that culture without electricity, they would go to bed much earlier. That would make midnight more truly the middle of the night (like our 2 or 3am).
- Sometimes God grants divine insomnia.
- 119:63 – “companion of all who fear You” – This is where the psalmist finds fellowship.
- Self-love reigns in most men; we love the rich and despise the poor, and so have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons. (James 2:1)
 - “fear You” – “The fear of the Lord is clean.” (Ps. 19:9)
 - This is not legalism; this is genuine brokenness before the reality of Almighty God.
- 119:64 – “The earth, O Lord, is full of Your mercy” – “Everywhere I go, I see You” – Rich Mullins.
- 119:65 – “dealt well with Your servant” – It is something that God has dealt at all with such insignificant and undeserving beings as we are.
- 119:66 – “Teach me” – A sight of our errors and a sense of our ignorance should make us teachable.
- 119:67 – “afflicted” – God’s affliction is corrective. (See also v. 71 and 75.)
- God’s affliction is according to His faithfulness, for He has “dealt well with Your servant.” (v. 65) His affliction is needed at times to open our eyes to the truth and lead us to repentance, but it never comes in anger. Even affliction comes from His love. (2 Cor. 4:17)
 - God chastens the sons that He loves. (Heb. 12:6)
 - “went astray” – “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way.” (Isa. 53:6) It is a part of all of our stories.

- 119:68 – “You are good, and do good” – No matter how it may seem at the time, what God does is good because it comes out of who He is.
- 119:69 – “The proud” – Satan fell by pride.
- “forged a lie” – Lies made against the godly are trimmed up with shadows of truth.
 - “a lie” – It is the lie that God is not good, that He doesn’t know, or that He doesn’t care.
- 119:70 – “as fat as grease” – In OT times, fatness was a sign of health. But this phrase is speaking of fatness as a result of over-indulgence and carnality. Sickening.
- As a full stomach loathes meat and cannot digest it, so wicked men hate the Word. It will not go down with them; it will not gratify their lusts.
 - “fat” – This word also implies “stupid, or insensitive.”
- 119:71 – “That I may learn” – Affliction makes us teachable.
- 119:72 – “better to me than thousands of coins of gold” – The Word of God is more valuable than all the wealth of this world.
- “What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Mark 8:36)
 - The Word of God must be nearer to us than our friends, dearer to us than our lives, sweeter to us than our liberty, and pleasanter to us than all earthly comforts.
- 119:73-80 – This section focuses on the psalmist’s personal experience with God and its attractive influence upon others.
- Medieval theologians interpreted this section as the prayer of a man to be restored to his state of original innocence and wisdom by being conformed to the image of Christ.
- 119:73 – “Your hands have made me” – Our Maker knows us well. Therefore, He knows how to instruct us.
- The Creator has left us the owner’s manual – the Bible.
 - “Give me understanding” – The truth is, it is only God that can soundly enlighten our consciences.
- 119:75 – “in faithfulness You have afflicted me” – His affliction is a result of His goodness.
- God cannot be faithful without doing all things that tend to our good and eternal welfare.
 - If God showed the heights of His faithfulness when He afflicted His Son on the cross, how much would that faithfulness stand when we too are afflicted?
 - “Your judgments are right” – In the psalmist’s creed, there was no such thing as chance. God ordered all that befell him, and he loved to think it so.
- 119:76-80 – “Let” – 5 times. He is making 5 requests.
- 119:76 – “be my comfort” – The psalmist is looking for comfort from God alone. (2 Cor. 1)
- He is not seeking comfort from the things the people of this world are running after.
 - This is strange that a man should seek comfort at the same hand that strikes him. (v. 75)
- 119:77 – “Your law is my delight” – David himself had his crown to delight in, his music to delight in, and kingdom to delight in; but the love he had to God’s law did drown all other delights.

- 119:78 – “the proud be ashamed” – Allowing God to vindicate.
- “meditate” – The verb in the second clause of the verse may be rendered, “I will speak of.” Jesus would say, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matt. 12:34)
- 119:79 – “those who fear You turn to me” – The psalmist is carrying a testimony.
- “fear You...know Your testimonies” – Fear and knowledge do make up a godly man. Knowledge without fear breeds presumption; fear without knowledge breeds superstition.
- 119:80 – “heart be blameless” – The heart is the center of the person.
- “not be ashamed” – God’s Word will keep our conscience from pain.
- 119:81-88 – His enemies have brought him to the lowest condition of anguish and depression, yet he is faithful to the law and trustful in his God.
- “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” (Job 13:15)
- 119:81 – “soul faints” – This is the struggle in waiting for God’s deliverance.
- “salvation” – That is deliverance from difficult circumstances.
- 119:82 – “comfort me” – Searching the Word is not immediately yielding the comfort the psalmist is seeking at this time.
- 119:83 – “wineskin in smoke” – The smoke permeates the skin, dries it out, and makes it unusable.
- “not forget Your statutes” – A man may be reduced to skin and bone, and all his comfort may be dried out of him, and yet he may hold fast his integrity and glorify his God.
- 119:85 – “The proud” – The special reason why he desires to be freed from the company of the wicked is because they always tempt the pious by relating the pleasures of the world.
- “pits for me, which is not according to Your law” – There were lawful pits, but the Law also clearly outlined pits that were not lawful.
 - We too (like Job) go through things sometimes that are under God’s providence but not given to us directly from God Himself.
- 119:87 – “almost made an end of me” – The lions are chained; they can range no further than our God permits.
- “did not forsake Your precepts” – Which is the goal of the enemy.
- 119:88 – “Revive me” – He is looking for God to bring life to His Word and his life.
- 119:89 – “word is settled” – The steadfastness of the Word makes it a rock to build a life upon.
- That as His Word stands fast in heaven, so does His faithfulness on earth where the afflictions of the godly seem to contradict it.
- 119:91 – “They continue this day” – The laws of creation hold to this day because they exist at His word.
- The precepts imposed upon vegetation when first called into being on creation’s third day, still hold vegetation in implicit submission.

119:92 – “I would then have perished” – In our darkest seasons, nothing has kept us from desperation but the promise of the Lord.

- At least there is one thing to be sure of; something that gives answers we can trust.

119:93 – “never forget Your precepts” – If we’d be as faithful to God’s Word as He is.

- “given me life” – This answers the prayer for revival from v. 88.

119:95 – “Your testimonies” – The account of God’s faithfulness to those who have gone before, like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Ruth, Samson, David, etc.

119:96 – “the consummation of all perfection” – God’s Word continues far beyond the efforts of any person regarding time, power, or effectiveness.

- “broad” – The idea is “sure, steadfast.”

119:97 – “I love Your law” – In a day when not everyone else does.

- He speaks not of his knowing, reading, hearing, speaking, or outward practicing of the law, but of love to the law.
- Christ loved the Word of God more than He loved His own life.
- Whoever loves salvation will love this Word, love to read it, love to hear it.
- “my meditation” – “In His law he meditates day and night.” (Ps. 1:2)

119:98-100 – He makes three comparisons: his enemies, his teachers, and the ancients.

119:98 – “wiser than my enemies” – A thoroughly straightforward man, devoid of all policy, is a terrible puzzle to diplomatists.

- “they are ever with me” – A good man, wherever he goes, carries his Bible along with him, if not in his hands, yet in his head and in his heart.

119:99 – “more understanding” – This is not more knowledge, but more understanding.

119:100 – “ancients” – Old age.

- There is a wisdom that is gained by more than simply growing older.
- “keep Your precepts” – This is not just knowing the Word, but living it.
- Jesus not only quoted Scripture in His temptation (Matt. 4), but He followed its instruction as well.
- Obedience leads to greater light.

119:101 – “restrained” – The Hebrew word also denotes “fettered, or imprisoned.”

119:103 – “honey” – The sweetener of the day.

- Some parts of the Word are easier to swallow than others.
- Honey provided instant energy and revitalization.

119:104 – “hate every false way” – “Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.” (Rom. 12:9)

- Jesus said “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” (John 14:15)
- “false way” – True hearts are not indifferent about falsehood; they grow warm in indignation. As they love the truth, so they hate the lie.

119:105 – “a lamp to my feet” – One step at a time.

- “light” – This implies a darkness that creates a need for light.
 - Light is necessary both within and without.
 - Light shines to the future. (2 Pet. 1:16-21)
 - Each man should use the Word of God personally, practically, and habitually, that he may see his way and see what lies in it.
 - “If we walk in the light as His is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7)
- “a light to my path” – In Judges, “everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21:25)
 - What we all want is not to see wonders that daze us and to be rapt in ecstatic visions and splendors, but a little light on the dark and troubled path we have to tread.
- “path” – This implies a beginning and an end.
 - If they would take the Bible as their guide, it would be a lamp to their feet, leading to the heavenly home.
 - Paul desired to finish his race with joy. (Acts 20:24)

119:106 – “I have sworn” – This is no half-hearted commitment.

119:107 – “I am afflicted” – Trying to follow the Word in our own power will ultimately lead to failure and pain.

- Jesus Christ was a “Man of sorrows.” (Isa. 53:3)
- “Revive me” – The psalmist is looking for something supernatural. He is desiring to live in the light of the Word in dependence upon God.
 - The Lord has promised, prepared, and provided this blessing of renewed life for all His waiting servants.

119:108 – “freewill offerings” – “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire.” (Ps. 40:6; Heb. 10:5)

119:109 – “My life is continually in my hand” – The psalmist is recognizing his own mortality. He is in a state of extreme peril.

119:110 – “wicked have laid a snare for me” – This is why we need light for the path. (v. 105)

- “I have not strayed” – It is not the laying the bait that hurts the fish, if the fish do not bite.

119:111 – “Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage” – We can see the faithfulness of God in the lives of those who have gone before us.

- “they are the rejoicing of my heart” – He does not say that God’s testimonies bring joy, but that they are joy.

119:112 – “inclined my heart” – It seems that God has answered his prayer from v. 36.

- What are the inclinations of our heart? The Word will conform even the inclinations of our heart to the will of God. (John 17:17)
- The psalmist, in order briefly to define what it is to serve God, asserts that he applied not only his hands, eyes, or feet, to the keeping of the law, but that he began with the affection of the heart.
- “my heart” – This goes deeper than the mind.
- “to the very end” – There is an end to the path.

- 119:113 – “hate” – This is the other side of love. Those who know what they love must also know what they hate. (Rom. 12:9)
- The opposite of the fixed and fallible law of God is the wavering, changing opinion of men. David had an utter contempt and abhorrence for this; all his reverence and regard went to the sure word of testimony. In proportion to his love to the law was his hate of man’s inventions.
 - “double-minded” – or “vain thoughts.” (1 Kings 18:21)
 - The double-minded man is “unstable in all his ways.” (James 1:8)
 - We are told to take “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:5)
 - Sin starts in the thought life. “Sow a thought, reap an action. Sow an action, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny.”
- 119:114 – “my hiding place” – He is where we run when we find those things we hate inside us.
- “hope in Your word” – Hoping in anything else is an allusion.
 - The coming of Christ is “the blessed hope” of the Church. (Titus 2:13)
- 119:115 – “Depart from me” – One result of hating evil to put distance between us and those in sin and compromise.
- We are to evangelize the unbelieving world, not try to find fellowship there.
- 119:116 – “Uphold me” – David meant to keep the law of the Lord, but he first needed the Lord of the law to keep him.
- 119:118 – “deceit” – He means not here of that deceit whereby the wicked deceive others, but that whereby they deceive themselves.
- 119:119 – “the wicked of the earth” – They are thus characterized, because it is on the earth where the wicked flourish. (Jer. 17:13)
- “like dross” – As God skims the junk out of society and from our individual lives in His smelting and purifying process.
 - Good men have need to be restrained from sin by the terrors of the Lord; especially when judgment begins at the house of God, and hypocrites are discovered and put away like dross.
- 119:120 – “trembles for fear of You” – In light of eternal hell.
- 119:121 – “done justice” – For those who have done their best, God will do no less than His best.
- 119:122 – “surety” – The earnest, guarantee, down payment.
- The only verse without any direct or indirect reference to the Word of God.
- 119:124 – “Teach me” – David (if he wrote this psalm) had Nathan and Gad, the prophets; and beside them, the ordinary Levites to teach him. He read the Word of God diligently and did meditate in the law night and day; but still he acknowledged all this was nothing unless God did teach him.
- 119:125 – “servant” – The bond-slave. (Exod. 21 – piercing the ear.)
- We all serve a master.

- 119:126 – “time for You to act” – The psalmist recognizes the need to for God to act.
- If God work not, it is certain there is nothing before the church but the prospect of utter discomfiture and overthrow.
 - “When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.” (Isa. 59:19)
- 119:127 – “More than gold” – The wealth of God’s Word far outweighs the wealth of this world.
- 119:128 – “Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right” – The Bible is right about salvation, righteousness, justice, morality, forgiveness, and sin.
- The upright man squares all his actions by a right rule; God’s sacred Word directs him.
 - “hate every false way” – Both in public and in private; externally and in the heart.
 - Love to truth begat hatred of falsehood. This godly man was not indifferent to anything, but that which he did not love he hated.
- 119:129 – “Your testimonies” – The story of God’s faithfulness in the lives who have gone before.
- “wonderful” – And we have more light than the psalmist; he had the Levitical sacrifices, we see Jesus on the cross.
 - “my soul keeps them” – These things are grasped by something deeper than intellect.
- 119:130 – “The entrance of Your words” – Man is in need of understanding that only God can provide. This understanding cannot be found, but only received.
- “light” – Clarity. The ability to see and discern the right course of action.
 - “For whatever makes manifest is light.” (Eph. 5:13)
 - “understanding to the simple” – God is able and willing to communicate the eternal to the simple.
 - “God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise.” (1 Cor. 1:27)
 - “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.” (Matt. 11:25)
- 119:131 – “opened my mouth and panted” – The psalmist is hungry for it.
- This is a metaphor taken from men scorched and sweltered with heat, or from those that have run themselves out of breath.
- 119:132 – “Your custom” – God is merciful toward us because He is mercy.
- 119:133 – “Direct my steps” – He is asking to be led.
- Even though we agree with the Word, we still struggle to live it.
 - Life is lived one step at a time.
 - “no iniquity have dominion” – Not even the littlest of sins.
 - You cannot barter with the old man. He is a deceiver and a traitor; He doesn’t negotiate, but only seeks dominion.
 - “iniquity” – or “bent.” Our natural inclination to sin is why we struggle to do what we know is right.
- 119:134 – “oppression of man” – The dangers without.
- We are not to allow our lives to be controlled by the opinion of others.

- 119:135 – “Make Your face shine” – He is seeking God’s pleasure.
- God’s ministers can pronounce the words but they cannot impart the spirit.
- 119:136 – “Rivers of water” – These are tears, repentance, and brokenness over sin.
- The sins of sinners are the sorrows of saints. We must mourn for that which we cannot mend. (Ezek. 9:4; Psalm 126:5)
- 119:137 – “Righteous are You” – Satan would like us to doubt the righteousness of God.
- “And upright are Your judgments” – Jehovah both says and does that which is right, and that alone. This is a great stay to the soul in time of trouble.
- 119:139 – “zeal has consumed me” – It was said of Jesus, “Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.” (John 2:17)
- “forgotten” – The Pharisees laid aside the truth about God.
- 119:140 – “pure” – Lit. “refined, all of one substance.” God’s word contains nothing worthless or useless; it is absolutely perfect, without the dross of vanity and fallibility which runs through human writings.
- “Your servant loves it” – We will only be able to say “We have done as God commands” if we first say “We love what God commands.”
- 119:143 – “overtaken me” – or “found me,” like dogs tracking out a wild beast hiding or fleeing.
- “my delights” – Aquinas says delight in moral things is the rule by which we may judge of men’s goodness or badness.
- 119:144 – “everlasting” – The Word touches heaven and continues there.
- 119:145-152 – He who has been with God in the closet will find God with him in the furnace.
- How he prayed (v. 145), what he prayed (v. 146), when he prayed (v. 147), how long he prayed (v. 148), what he pleaded (v. 149), what happened (v. 150), how he was rescued (v. 151), and the testimony about the matter (v. 152).
- 119:147 – “before the dawning of the morning” – The Lord Jesus remained all night in prayer.
- Be it ours to bathe in the softly flowing river of communion with God, before the heat of the wilderness and the burden of the way begin to oppress us.
- 119:153 – “affliction” – We all have some.
- 119:154 – “Plead my cause” – He is seeking an advocate to stand in his stead and bear his burden. (1 John 2:1)
- Jesus always lives to make intercession for His followers. (Heb. 7:24)
 - “The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Rom. 8:26)
 - “Revive me” – He is looking for the supernatural.
 - God adds the divine to the difficulty.
 - “according to Your Word” – God leads us to find our life in His Word.
 - God’s power and our obedience go together.

119:155 – “Salvation” – To be saved! It is a rescue from such a shipwreck. It is a rest, and in such an unimaginable home. It is to lie down forever in the bosom of God, in an endless rapture of insatiable contentment.

119:156 – “judgments” – Specific instructions.

119:158 – “disgusted” – “I never thought the world had been so wicked when the gospel began as now I see it is. I rather hoped that everyone would have leaped for joy to have found himself freed from the filth of the pope, from his lamentable molestations of poor, troubled consciences, and that through Christ they would by faith obtain the celestial treasure they sought after before with such vast cost ad labor, though in vain. And especially I thought the bishops and universities would with joy of heart have received the true doctrines; but I have been lamentably deceived” – Martin Luther.

119:159 – “I love Your precepts” – This is a sure test: many there are who have a warm side towards the promises, but as for the precepts, they cannot endure them.

- “Your lovingkindness” – Ultimately, it is all of grace.

119:160 – “The entirety of Your word is truth” – We can trust God’s Word from beginning to end.

- “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” (2 Tim. 3:16)

119:161-168 – One of only two sections of Psalm 119 where no request is made.

119:161 – “Princes” – Those in authority.

- Those who act like Christ might get treated like Christ.

- “in awe of Your word” – Those who fear God need to fear nothing else.

- They that tremble at the conviction of the Word may triumph in the consolations of it.

- “The fear of man brings a snare.” (Prov. 29:25)

119:162 – “treasure” – Something you dig for.

119:163 – “abhor lying” – Falsehood in doctrine, in life, or in speech, falsehood in any form or shape, had become utterly detestable to the psalmist.

- “lying” – Deception and hypocrisy.

- No deception is worse than religious deception. False prophets.

119:164 – “Seven times” – Speaks of completeness.

119:165 – “peace” – (Heb. “shalom”) Lit. “wholeness.”

- “those who love Your law” – It deals not with those who perfectly keep the law, for where should such men be found, but with those who love it, whose hearts and hands are made to square with its precepts and demands.

119:166 – “do Your commandments” – The psalmist calls God’s Word “a lamp unto his feet (v. 105). It was not only a light to his eyes to see by, but a light to his feet to walk by.

119:168 – “all my ways are before You” – “For the Word of God is living and powerful...and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Heb. 4:12)

119:169-176 – The concluding section includes a list of petitions.

119:169 – “my cry come before You” – As all our ways are before Him (v. 168), so also all are cries come before Him as well.

- “understanding” – This is more than sheer knowledge.
 - Our understanding of the Word of God comes by teaching, but also through experience; we understand hardly anything till we experience it.
 - “Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.” (1 Cor. 8:1)

119:170 – “Deliver me” – Understanding from the Word leads to freedom and deliverance.

119:171 – “utter” – Lit. “to pour out, or bubble forth.” What naturally flows from our mouths?

- “praise” – Freedom produces praise.

119:172 – “speak of Your word” – The witness of the mouth that flows from the witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

119:173 – “my help, for I have chosen Your precepts” – The psalmist is asking God to match the choice he has made.

119:174 – “long for Your salvation” – The will leads to desire.

119:175 – “let my soul live” – Life comes from Jesus alone.

- “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10)

119:176 – “gone astray like a lost sheep” – “All we like sheep have gone astray.” (Isa. 53:6)

- “gone astray” – or “wander up and down.”
 - It is the nature of sheep to wander. (The tense of the original Hebrew is of the most extensive range, comprehending all time past, and also the habitual tendencies of man.)
 - The urgent things in life are rarely important, and the important things in life are rarely urgent.
- “Seek Your servant” – The psalmist realizes that all the weight of this relationship cannot be carried by man.
 - Jesus, the good shepherd, seeks the 1 lost sheep, leaving the 99. (John 10:11; Luke 15:1-7)
 - “The lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them...” (Rev. 7:17)

Psalms 120-134 are the Songs of Ascent, sung by the Jews while travelling to Jerusalem for the Feasts.

- Biblically, whenever you go to Jerusalem, you always go up.
- There are 15 Songs of Ascent. There are also 15 steps from the Court of the Women to the Temple entrance. Some think one song was sung at each step.
- These psalms, though used at the Feasts, were compiled from different times and occasions.

Chapter 120:

Psalm 120 – A certain author supposes that this hymn was sung by an Israelite upon leaving his house to go up to Jerusalem.

120:1 – “distress” – This may be referring to the captivity of Assyria and Babylon.

- “cried to the Lord” – This is the wisest course that he could follow. It is of little use to appeal to our fellows on the matter of slander, for the more we stir in it the more it spreads.
- “Lord” – Lit. “Jehovah.”

120:3 – “you false tongue” – This is antagonism and deception from unbelievers.

- The natural always mocks the spiritual...especially when you make an effort to separate from the world to seek God.

120:4 - “coals of the broom tree” – In the Middle East, these are known as the hottest coals of a fire.

120:5 – “Meshech” – He was a descendant of Japheth.

- “Kedar” – He was a son of Abraham and Keturah.
- The psalmist is speaking of a time when he dwelt among antagonistic unbelievers.

Chapter 121:

Psalm 121 –

121:1 – “the hills” – The singers would see Jerusalem seated in the hills they were facing.

- “whence comes my help” – This is the Manifest Presence of the Lord in Jerusalem.

121:3 – “not allow your foot to be moved” – The path of obedience is sure-footed, even while making a very dangerous journey.

- “keeps” – Lit. “to guard, protect.” The word is used 6 times in this psalm.
- “will not slumber” – God doesn’t journey or slumber when we are in trouble. He always watches over us.
- We can sleep in safety because our God is ever awake.

121:5 – “the Lord is your shade” – This is very important for a desert journey.

- Some refer to the shade as a shadow, that is, always present with you.

121:6 – “sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon” – God did this for the nation of Israel on it’s 40-year journey through the desert; warming them at night with the pillar of fire and shading them through the day with the pillar of cloud.

121:8 – “preserve your going out and your coming in” – Even when we feel like the journey we are on with the Lord is going to kill us.

- “even forevermore” – “God has not led me so tenderly thus far to forsake me at the very gate of heaven” – Adoniram Judson.
- A God who can get me to heaven is enough to get me through this life too.

Chapter 122:

Psalm 122 –

122:1 – “Within your gates, O Jerusalem” – The singers have reached the city.

- “the house” – In post-exile Jerusalem, the Temple would have been a poor comparison to Solomon’s.

122:3 – “compact” – Lit. “held or knit together.” Unified.

- The gladness of hold men is aroused by the adhesiveness of love, the unity of life.

122:5 – “thrones are set there for judgment” – This may be anticipating the Kingdom Age.

122:6 – “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” – God’s promise to “bless those who bless you” (Gen. 12:3) still holds.

- This peace will only result from Jesus returning to Jerusalem as king.
- “Jerusalem” – means “City of Peace” or “Possession of Peace.”

122:9 – “the house of the Lord” – There were at least 480 synagogues in Jerusalem.

Chapter 123:

Psalm 123 –

123:1 – “Unto You I lift up my eyes” – Upon arriving in Jerusalem, the people begin to worship.

123:2 – “servants look to the hand of their masters” – In that culture, servants would watch their master and respond to the slightest gesture. The servants were expected to respond without speaking a word.

- God doesn’t want to direct us with a “bit and bridle”(Ps. 32:9), but with the subtle notions of his face and hand.
- Orders and payment come from the hand of the Lord.
- To wait on God is more than to look. To wait is to look constantly, with patience and submission, by subjecting our affections and wills and desires to God’s will.

123:3 – “filled with contempt” – This servant is scorned and held in contempt by others.

- “contempt” – Lit. “openly despise with mockery.”

123:4 – “Our soul is exceedingly filled” – They are easy from needing nothing.

Chapter 124:

Psalm 124 –

124:2 – “men rose up against us” – This may be looking back to the captivity.

124:3 – “swallowed us alive” – The word implies eating with insatiable appetite. Every man that eats must also swallow, but a glutton is rather a swallower than an eater. He throws his meat whole down his throat, and eats (as we may say) without chewing.

124:4 – “waters would have overwhelmed us” – Revelation 12 speaks of the plan of the enemy to wipe out Israel with a flood.

- For all natural reason, Israel should have been gone 2,000 years ago.

124:8 – “help in the name of the Lord” – “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and they are saved.” (Prov. 18:10)

- How, then, can we withstand or defend ourselves by our own power?

- “Who made heaven and earth” – It is as if the psalmist said, “As long as I see heaven and earth, I will never distrust.”

Chapter 125:

Psalm 125 – This short psalm may be summed up in those words of the prophet, Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.” (Isa. 3:10-11) Thus are life and death, the blessing and the curse, set before us often in the Psalms.

125:1 – “trust” – Note how he commands no work here to be done, but only speaks of trust.

- “Mount Zion” – It seems God considers this to be the center of His created universe.

- The Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world was killed in Jerusalem.

- “cannot be moved” – It certainly is not that Jerusalem hasn’t been assaulted.

125:2 – “mountains surround Jerusalem” – Jerusalem is nestled among the surrounding mountains.

- What a double security the two verses set before us. First, we are established and then entrenched; settled, and then sentineled; made like a mount, and then protected as if by mountains.

125:3 – “the scepter of wickedness” – The people of God are not to expect immunity from trial because the Lord surrounds them, for they may feel the power of persecution of the ungodly. But though the rod may light upon their portion, it shall not rest upon it.

125:4 – “Do good, O Lord” – He is seeking his reward from God alone.

- “those who are good” – The good in us is God in us.

125:5 – “their crooked ways” – Two kinds of ways are always to be found, the upright and the men of crooked ways.

Chapter 126:

Psalm 126 – Some refer this psalm to that great and general captivity of mankind under sin, death, and the devil, and to the redemption purchased by the death and blood-shedding of Christ and published in the gospel.

126:1 – “the Lord brought back the captivity” – As by the Lord’s permission they were led into captivity, so only by His power there were set at liberty.

- “the captivity of Zion” – This is likely referring to the 70 years in Babylon.
 - Some believe this refers to the Assyrian threat on Jerusalem which was put down by God sending an angel to kill 185,000 enemy soldiers in one night.
- “like those who dream” – This is the testimony of all those who have seen God miraculously deliver them. It keeps us from worshipping the miracle.

126:2 – “filled with laughter” – Doubtless the former pain added to the zest of the pleasure.

- They that were laughed at, now laugh.

126:4 – “Bring back” – Lit. “turn around.”

- “streams in the South” – That is the Negev/Arabah, the desert.

126:5 – “sow in tears” – Not in anger, frustration, or duty...but in brokenness and humility.

- God looks at our attitude in rebuilding.
- The three rules of sowing and reaping are: 1. You reap of the kind you sow, 2. You reap more than you sow, and 3. You reap after you sow.
- “shall” – Used three times in two verses. The certainty of the harvest is verified by the positive assertiveness of the text.

126:6 – “He” – The general assurance is applied to each on in particular. That which is spoken in the previous verse in the plural is here represented in the singular.

- “weeping” – Weeping must not hinder sowing. When we suffer ill we must be doing well.
- “doubtless” – Because the Lord has written “doubtless,” take heed that you do not doubt.
- “Bringing his sheaves” – The fruit of people released from captivity.

Chapter 127:

Psalm 127 –

127:1 – “builds the house” – There is a labor involved in building a house and a home.

- “vain” – Used 3 times in the first two verses.
- “Unless the Lord guards the city” – Those taken to captivity in Babylon know this well.
 - A city is only as safe as its submission to God.

127:2 – “vain for you to rise up early” – Rising early to get ahead or because of anxiety.

- God isn’t obliged by our effort or sacrifice. His blessing only comes by His grace.
- “the bread of sorrows” – Living in fear and anxiety.
 - “The servant of the Lord must not strive.” (2 Tim. 2:24 - KJV)
- “He gives His beloved sleep” – His beloved, without any of these racking cares, enjoys contentment.
 - Note how Jesus slept amid the hurly-burly of a storm at sea. He knew that He was in His Father’s hands.
 - Quiet sleep is the gift of God, and it is the love of God to give quiet sleep.

127:3 – “heritage” – The idea of this word is “possession, but as a stewardship; an inheritance; an assignment.” Children are God’s more than they are ours.

- Parents must fear God more than they fear their children.
- “a reward” – Never a mistake.

127:4 – “arrows in the hand of a warrior” – Our children are not to be coddled or held too tightly, but set on the bowstring to be released.

- Part of the responsibility of where the arrow flies is dependant on the skill of the archer. The arrow must be straight and polished, the archer must know the target, most tension occurs just before release, winds must be considered, trajectory effects distance, and the release must be smooth.
- In that culture, children were to protect (like arrows) their parents in their old age.
- “children” – It is the responsibility of parents to teach them obedience, and obedience must be based on something.

127:5 – “quiver full” – Some quivers are larger than others.

- For those without birth children, they can have spiritual children.
- “in the gate” – This is the next generation rising up to handle the important matters of society.

Chapter 128:

Psalm 128 –

128:1 – “fears the Lord” – This is not a tormenting fear (1 John 4:18), but a cleansing fear (Ps. 19:9).

- To us, fear sounds contrary to blessedness; but not in God’s economy.
- Those who fear God, need fear nothing else.
- “walks in His ways” – Godly fear will lead to godly living.

128:2 – “eat the labor of your hands” – This may not be exorbitantly wealthy, but it does meet the needs.

- Blessing doesn’t mean we don’t work. In God’s view, it would not be a blessed thing for us to live without exertion, nor to eat the unearned bread of dependence. The happiest state on earth is one in which we have something to do, strength to do it with, and a fair return for what we have done. This, with the Divine Blessing, is all that we ought to desire.

128:3 – “fruitful vine” – This is speaking of the physical/sexual relationship.

- “vine” – It clings and grows in the house.
 - Vines produce fruit according to what they are.
- “olive plants” – Lit. “olive seedlings, transplants.”
 - Seedlings need constant care and attention. They must stay in the shade of the parent plant to stay protected until it is large enough.
 - Olive vineyards will keep producing for over 100 years without being tended. Olive trees can survive fully immersed in water.

128:4 – “Behold” – This is something we must consider, because God’s blessing is contrary to how we often think of things.

128:6 – “children’s children” – They’ll see fruitfulness in the lives of their grandchildren.

Chapter 129:

Psalm 129 – “A Pilgrim’s Look at God’s Faithfulness.”

129:1 – “afflicted me from my youth” – Looking back to Israel’s affliction in Egypt.

- History certainly bears ample testimony.
- Lord, number me with Your saints. Let me share their grief if I may also partake of their glory.

129:2 – “not prevailed against me” – This is the testimony of every believer.

129:3 – “ploughed on my back” – This is similar to Jesus’ scourging. (Isa. 50; Matt. 27)

129:5 – “hate Zion” – Jesus said, “If the world hates you, you know that is hated Me before it hated you.”

129:6 – “grass on the housetops” – The seeds would be blown onto the flat rooftops and grow quickly in the shallow dirt.

- “before it grows up” – Not allowing them to come to maturity.

129:7 – “the reaper does not fill his hand” – Thus do the wicked come to nothing.

129:8 – “Neither let those who pass by them say” – We dare not use pious expressions as mere compliments, and hence we dare not wish God-speed to evil men lest we be partakers of their evil deeds. (2 John 11)

- “blessing of the Lord be upon you” – The blessing of Israel was completely dependant on its relationship with God.

Chapter 130:

Psalm 130 – “The Believer’s Inward Look.”

130:1 – “Out of the depths I have cried” – These prayers are arising out of brokenness.

- Desperate times call for desperate prayers.
- In the believer, the Holy Spirit groans with speech too deep for words. (Rom. 8)

130:3 – “mark iniquities” – It is good that God marks our sin, so He doesn’t miss any when He casts them behind His back as far as the east is from the west.

- “Who could stand?” – Nobody is perfect enough to stand before God in their own righteousness.

130:4 – “that You may be feared” – Grace yields more and better fruit than legalism.

- Seth Joshua, who ministered during the Welsh Revival, translated this “There is forgiveness with You, enough to frighten us.” (Times of revival are always Christ-centered.)
- Our forgiveness was paid by Christ’s sacrifice.

130:6 – “watch for the morning” – The long hours of the night watchmen.

130:8 – “redeem Israel from all his iniquities” – Compare this with the burden of their sin from v. 3.

- Such is the redemption that God’s mercy procures unto us; it not only delivers us from a dungeon, but also puts us into possession of a palace.

Chapter 131:

Psalm 131 – “The Response of the Redeemed Pilgrim.”

- This is one of the shortest psalms to read, but one of the longest to learn.

131:1 – “not haughty” – He is humbled by the grace of God.

- A proper perspective of God (Ps. 130:3,8) yields a proper perspective of self.
- “Nor my eyes lofty” – Pride has its seat in the heart, but its principal expression is in the eye.
- “great matters” – He doesn’t desire to search out great philosophical questions or deep theological understandings. He is content to be himself with the Lord.
- A desire for profound things will only lead to frustration.
- Stagnation is always a result of not responding to the will of God as is currently revealed.

131:2 – “quieted my soul” – He has a deep-seated trust that God will care for him.

- With such a simplicity of submission should we rest and depend upon God. Let us take heed of being overwise and provident for ourselves, but let us trust our Father which is in heaven and refer ourselves to His wise and holy government.
- “weaned child” – The Hebrew word for “wean” means “to complete, to ripen, to treat kindly.”
- That culture weaned children at 3-5 years old. This child is weaned, but still dependant.
- A weaned child is content to take what is given to him.

Chapter 132:

Psalm 132 – Looking to the events of 2 Sam. 6-7.

- This is the longest psalm of ascent.

132:1 – “afflictions” – Lit. “anxious cares.”

- David’s primary care was to build a house for the Lord. This was more important to him than his own personal comfort.

132:5 – “dwelling place for the Mighty One” – David’s desire was for God to be at the center of the nation, by bringing the ark to Jerusalem and/or building the Temple.

- This is the strength and fortitude of the people, to have God present with them.

132:6 – “Ephrathah” – Bethlehem, David’s hometown. (Ruth 4:11; Micah 5:2)

- The vision for the Temple has spread to the surrounding people.
- “fields of the woods” – This is likely referring to Kirjath Jearim, the place where the ark of the covenant stayed after being returned from the Philistines.

132:7 – “Let us worship” – Note the progression in this psalm – “we heard” (v. 6), “we found” (v. 6), “let us go” (v. 7), and “let us worship” (v. 7).

132:8-10 – This is similar to Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple in 2 Chron. 6:41-42.

132:8 – “Your resting place” – Unless the Lord shall rest with us, there is no rest for us.

132:10 – “For Your servant David’s sake” – Prayed by Hezekiah in 2 Kings 19:32-34.

132:11 – “The Lord has sworn in truth” – Trusting in God’s promises.

132:14-18 – “I will” – Seven times. God is asserting His will.

132:14 – “resting place forever” – This is God’s plan for Jerusalem.
- This may be looking to the Kingdom Age.

132:15 – “satisfy her poor with bread” – The Lord has prepared of His goodness for the poor.

132:17 – “My Anointed” – Looking to the Messiah.

Chapter 133:

Psalm 133 – “Unity of the People of God.”

133:1 – “good and pleasant” – Not much in this world is both good and pleasant.

- “pleasant” – The same word which is used here for “pleasant” is used also in the Hebrew for a harmony of music.
 - Different notes played at the same time make a harmony.
- “brethren to dwell together in unity” – This would be sung by pilgrims travelling to the Feasts together.
- “dwell together” – Oh, for more of this rare virtue. Not the love which comes and goes, but that which dwells.
- “unity” – The only use of this word in the OT. (See also Eph. 4:3, 33.)
 - It is the work of the Holy Spirit to build unity in the body of Christ.
 - Biblical unity has Jesus in common. (1 John 1:3) Unity is not uniformity.

133:2 – “oil” – The anointing oil of the priests was to be distinct. (Exod. 29:7; Lev. 21:10)

- The anointing oil is an OT picture of the Holy Spirit.
- The oil would provide a fragrance that would cover the smell of the flesh.
- “running down” – Brotherly love comes from the head, but falls to the feet. Its way is downward. It “ran down,” and it “descended.” Love for the brethren condescends to men of low estate; it is not puffed up, but is lowly and meek.

133:3 – “the dew” – A picture of refreshing and renewal.

Chapter 134:

Psalm 134 – The pilgrims are going home and are concluding the songs of ascent.

- The shortest psalm of ascent.

134:1 – “bless” – (Hebrew “barak”) Lit. “to bless, to kneel.”

- “servants of the Lord” – These are they who bless the Lord.
- “by night” – The worship at the tabernacle was to go on 24 hours a day.
 - They are enjoying the presence of the Lord well into the night.
 - We dare not grow complacent in our pilgrimage.

134:2 – “Lift up your hands” – This is a posture of surrender and consecration.

134:3 – “heaven and earth...Zion” – God made the earth, but chose Jerusalem.

Chapter 135:

Psalm 135 –

135:1 – “Praise the Lord” – Lit. “Hallelujah.”

- Do not only magnify the Lord because He is God, but study His character and His doings, and thus render intelligent and appreciative praise.
- “servants of the Lord” – The priests and Levites.

135:3 – “His name” – The Jews couldn’t even pronounce the name of God.

135:4 – “Jacob...Israel” – Recognizing the two natures of the people of God.

- “His special treasure” – God separated Israel unto Himself. (1 Pet. 2:9)

135:5 – “For I know” – He knew by observation, inspiration, and realization.

- In the original Hebrew, the “I” is emphatic.

135:6 – “Whatever the Lord pleases” – God’s sovereignty.

135:7 – “the vapors” – The great hydro-system. 1.5 million tons of rain fall on the earth daily.

- “He makes lightening for the rain” – Some readily allow that God is the author of rain, thunder, and wind, in so far as He originally established this order of things in nature. But the psalmist goes farther than this, holding that when it rains, this is not effected by a blind instinct of nature, but is the consequence of the decree of God, Who is pleased at one time to darken the sky with clouds, and at another to brighten it again with sunshine.

135:11 – “Sihon...Og” – The kings of the giant-people of Canaan.

135:15 – “work of men’s hands” – They make their gods, rather than acknowledging that God made them.

- There is only vanity and lifelessness in worshipping man-made gods.
- It seems that these heathen gods are dumb, and blind, and deaf – a pretty bundle of infirmities to be found in a deity. (Jesus Himself healed speech, sight, and hearing.)

135:18 – “who make them are like them” – We will become like our God. (Ps. 115:4-8)

- This is how we become like Jesus Christ - 2 Cor. 3:18.
- There is a great danger in making Jesus look like us or trying to use Him to serve our own purposes.

135:19 – “Bless” – Lit. “to bend the knee.”

Chapter 136:

Psalm 136 – “The Great Hallel.”

- The psalm is antiphonal, or responsive.
- This was sung in Solomon’s Temple. (2 Chron. 7:3-6)

136:1-3 – Who God is.

136:1 – “Lord” – Lit. “Yahweh.”

- “He is good” – It is who He is, and is directly connected to His enduring mercy.
- “mercy” – Lit. “unmerited favor.” (Like “grace” in the NT.)
- “His mercy endures forever” – Repeated 26 times in this psalm. (Ps. 138:8)
 - Mercy pleases God. It is no trouble for Him to exercise mercy; it is His delight.

136:2 – “God” – Lit. “Elohim.”

136:3 – “Lord” – Lit. “Adonai.”

136:4 – “Who alone does great wonders” – He does them alone. That means He does so by Himself, unaided, needing nothing from others, asking no help from His creatures.

- Sometimes of late years there has been manifested a disposition to recede from the defense of the supernatural in religion. This is a great mistake.

136:4-25 – What God has done in creation (vv. 4-9), for Israel (vv. 10-22), and for all of us (vv. 23-25).

136:8 – “sun to rule” – In the time it takes to read this verse, the sun burns off 12 million tons of gases.

136:10-22 – God brought Israel out of Egypt (vv. 10-15), through the wilderness (v. 16), and into the promised land (vv. 17-22).

136:10 – “Him who struck Egypt” – God’s mercy can both bless Israel and curse Egypt at the same time.

136:21 – “their land” – The promised land.

136:23 – “remembered” – Lit. “to think about and turn attention to.”

- “lowly state” – This may be speaking of their captivity in Babylon.

136:26 – Our response to God.

- “the God of heaven” – This is a Persian title for God frequently found in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel. This title may be an indication that this psalm is post-exilic.

Chapter 137:

Psalm 137 – “Psalm from the Captivity.”

137:1 – “the rivers of Babylon” – That region is known for the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

- Ezekiel spoke of the River Chebar.
- “we wept” – They are mourning what they needlessly lost.
- “Zion” – Jerusalem, God’s promised city of blessing.
 - God would rather Jerusalem be destroyed by Babylon than to be defiled by the sin and idolatry of His people.

137:2 – “We hung our harps” – “The joyful harp is silent.” (Isa. 24:8)

137:3 – “Sing us one of the songs of Zion” – The insulting nature of the demand will become more conspicuous, if we consider that the usual subjects of these songs were the omnipotence of Jehovah and His love towards His chosen people.

137:4 – “How shall we sing?” – They lost the song.

- Songs may be heard from the from the prison cell of Phillipi. Songs may be heard from the calm death-bed, or by the open grave, but songs cannot be drawn forth from the soul on which the load of God’s displeasure, real or imagined, is lying.
- “sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” – Refusing mirth and happiness that would cause them to forget Jerusalem, their sin, and their offence against God.
 - What should we then do for our absence from another Jerusalem? Theirs was an earthly, old, robbed, spoiled, burned, sacked city; ours a heavenly, new one. A true child of Zion will never settle down in a strange land. He will look over all the pleasures of the world and the pleasures of sin, and say He seeks a better city, one whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. 11:10,16)

137:5-6 – Rabbinic tradition has this as the voice of God Himself.

- “my chief joy” – Jerusalem is key to God’s work on earth.

137:7 – “Edom” – Distant relatives and perennial enemies of Israel.

- “Raze it” – Edom needlessly piled on against Israel when Babylon was destroying Jerusalem.

137:8 – “Babylon, who are to be destroyed” – This is possibly a look at the still future end of Babylon. (Rev. 18:1-19:4; Jer. 49-52)

137:9 – “little ones against the rock” – This is how Babylon treated the Jews.

- We are not to regard the imprecations of this psalm in any other light than as prophetic. They are grounded on the many prophecies which had already gone forth on the subject of the destruction of Babylon.

Chapter 138:

Ps. 138 – “Psalm of David” – The first of 8 psalms of David in a row.

138:1 – “my whole heart” – God said David’s heart was perfect toward the Lord. (1 Kings 11:4; 15:3)
David never changed Gods.

138:2 – “worship toward Your holy temple” – This is very different from those who have hung their harps on the trees of Babylon. (Ps. 137:2)

- “magnified Your word about all Your name” – God’s opinion of His word.
 - God’s word defines His name. His word reveals who He is.
 - “The Word is the glass in which we see God, and seeing Him are changed into His likeness by His Spirit” – William Gurnall.

138:3 – “You answered me” – This is a great promise, whatever the difficulty.

- This is an answer from the God who is controlling the kingdoms of the earth. (v. 6)
- “strength in my soul” – This does not necessarily involve changing circumstances.
 - Some blessings don’t have to wait until heaven.

138:4 – “All the kings of the earth shall praise You” – “At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth.” (Phil. 2:10)

- 138:6 – “He regards the lowly” – God gives grace to the humble. (James 4:6)
- It is not the legalist, or the proud Pharisee, but the poor, humble publican who is smiting on his breast and crying, “God be merciful to me, a sinner” (Luke 18:13), that submits to the revelation of grace.
 - God loves to show His wisdom when human help and wisdom fail. (1 Cor. 1:26-31)
 - “Your gentleness has made me great.” (Ps. 18:35)

- 138:7 – “revive me” – We are “renewed day by day.” (2 Cor. 4:16-18)
- If we receive reviving, we need not regret affliction.
 - “Your right hand” – The hand of skill and strength.

- 138:8 – “The Lord will perfect that which concerns me” – He is confident in God’s faithfulness. (Phil. 1:6; Jude 24-25)
- “the works of Your hands” – “For we are His workmanship.” (Eph. 2:10)

Chapter 139:

Psalm 139 – God’s omniscience (v. 1-6), God’s omnipresence (v. 7-12), God’s omnipotence (v. 13-18), and God’s perfect righteousness (v. 19-24).

- One Hebrew scholar says, “Omniscience is a pompous word. It gives us a category for God without ever having touched our lives.”
- 139:1 – “searched” – Lit. “pierced, penetrate,” but in the sense of scrutinizing or investigating.
- This word is used of those mining gold or silver. (Job 18:3)
 - “The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.” (1 Cor. 2:10)
 - “known” – There is no subject attached in the Hebrew. God knows me and so much more.
 - “Before you were formed in the womb I knew you.” (Jer. 1:5)
 - This is the same Hebrew word for Adam knowing his wife in Gen. 4:1.
 - “You...me” – This is very personal to David. These are not just theological concepts.
 - God knows us and loves us anyway.
 - God’s parameters in our lives are in accordance with His knowledge of us.
- 139:2 – “my sitting down and my rising up” – God knows our most mundane activities of life, even getting in and out of bed.
- “understand my thought afar off” – God knows our thoughts before we even think them.
 - The open-theology view of the omniscience of God is unbiblical.
 - “afar off” – The idea is “in their origins.”
- 139:3 – “comprehend” – This comes from the Hebrew root meaning “to winnow, to sift.”
- “my path and my lying down” – Our public and private life, both when moving and when stationary.
 - “acquainted” – The idea is “completely familiar.”
- 139:5 – “hedged me” – This word is more often translated “besieged me.”
- God’s walls are for our protection. That which keeps us also protects us.
 - “laid Your hand upon me” – God is very near.
 - This is not the hand of a drill instructor or a police officer, but the touch of a Father.

- 139:6 – “cannot attain it” – God transcends human understanding. (Isa. 55:8-9)
- These truths are not meant for intellectual exercise.
 - The superiority of God’s wisdom and ways doesn’t keep David from receiving the comfort and faith from these truths. David will not be limited by his intellect.
- 139:8 – “heaven...hell” – This is as far up and as far down as anyone could go.
- “You are there” – God’s presence...and this is despite His knowledge of us.
 - The psalm was not written by a Pantheist. The psalmist speaks of God as a person everywhere present. God is everywhere, but He is not everything.
- 139:9 – “morning...the sea” – Referring to the east (the sunrise) and to the west (the Mediterranean Sea) of Israel.
- Jonah is a prime example of trying to escape God’s presence.
- 139:10 – “lead me” – Lit. “give guidance, straighten.”
- “Your right hand” – The hands of God are with His own servants to sustain them and against rebels to overthrow them.
 - “hold me” – Lit. “to take to oneself, catch, snatch.”
 - God isn’t just everywhere, He is “with me” everywhere.
- 139:11 – “fall on me” – Lit. “overwhelm.”
- “light about me” – God’s light can overpower any darkness. Not only can’t the dark hide us from God, but it can’t hide God from us either.
- 139:12 – “the darkness” – Physical and spiritual darkness.
- Jesus said, “this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:19)
 - There is no need to hide, because God knows us and loves us anyway. (v. 5)
 - “both alike to You” – God made both light and dark.
- 139:13 – “You” – Lit. “You and You alone.” The Hebrew is emphatic.
- “inward parts” – The deepest parts of who and what we are.
 - “covered” – Lit. “weave or braid.” God fashioned (“skillfully wrought” – v. 15) us in the womb. The original word has, however, also the idea of protecting, as in a booth or hut that has been woven or knit together.
 - This is interesting considering the DNA helix.
 - Instead of wondering at the number of premature deaths that are constantly witnessed, there is far greater reason to wonder that there are no more, and that any of us survive to seventy or eighty years of age.
- 139:14 – “fearfully” – Lit. “to shudder with astonishment.”
- 139:15 – “frame” – Speaking of the skeleton.
- “wrought” – Lit. “knit, embroidered.” This is finer work than “weaving” from v. 13.

139:16 – “saw” – Lit. “oversaw.” As an engineer oversees the construction of a building.

- This word was used of the overseers of the tabernacle work in the OT.
- “unformed” – From the Hebrew root meaning “curled, wrapped together.”
 - This seems to be speaking of the layers of an embryo when it is wrapped together.
 - In ancient Israel, the murder of an unborn baby was a capital crime. (Exod. 21)
- “all were written” – God knows the days we will live even before we live them.
- “days fashioned for me” – God has a personal-daily plan for our lives.
 - The Lord has prepared us for what He has prepared for us.

139:17 – “precious” – David could relish God’s sovereign care for himself. Despite the knowledge that those things are too high for us to understand, David still knows that God cares and has kept His word to him.

- “Your thoughts” – God looks after us as a doting parent, not a threatening boss. (Ps. 40:5)
 - This is the God of the universe stooping down into our individual lives.
 - “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (Jer. 29:11)

139:18 – “the sand” – David knew well the vast expanse of desert sands.

139:19 – “slay the wicked” – David’s understanding of God’s nature caused him to anticipate God’s judgment on the wicked, and David wanted to be separated from them.

139:21 – “hate them” – If we love God, we will also hate evil and separate ourselves from it. (Rom. 12:9)

- A faithful servant has the same interests, the same friends, and the same enemies, with his master.

139:22 – “perfect hatred” – It is hypocrisy to love in ourselves that which we hate in other people. Perfect hatred is hating all of God’s enemies, no matter where they are found.

139:23 – “Search me” – Lit. “dig into me,” as a minor.

- David understood all of God’s characteristics with respect to his own life. His knowledge of God’s omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence didn’t promote David to pride, but to humbly place himself under the hand of God.
- One of the attributes of sin is to hide man from himself, to conceal his deformity, to prevent him from forming a just conception of his true condition. Our hearts are “deceitfully wicked” (Jer. 17:9). We need God to search us because we don’t even know ourselves.
- He had need to be a true man who can put himself deliberately into such a crucible. Yet we may each one desire such searching, for it would be a terrible calamity to us for sin to remain in our hearts unknown and undiscovered.
- God searches to the motivations and desires.
- “Try me” – Lit. “refine me,” as metals are refined in the furnace.
 - David is keenly aware of his failures and his bent to sin.
 - The refining process is for us to know ourselves, not for God to know. He already knows. But we need trials to teach us about ourselves what God already sees in us.
 - David was a man of courage. When he slew a lion in the way, when he successfully encountered a bear, when he went out to meet the giant Goliath, he gave undoubted proofs of courage; but never did he display such signal intrepidity as when he determined to look into his own heart.

139:24 – “wicked way” – There are definite tracks, paths, or ways of life – some are good, others are not.

- As I hate the wicked in their way, so would I hate every wicked way in myself.
- “the way everlasting” – This is God’s way as opposed to our way.
- The right way has the right end to it.
- “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” (John 14:6)

Chapter 140:

Psalm 140 – “A Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies Without.”

140:1 – “Preserve me from violent men” – David spent many years running from battle to battle and enemy to enemy.

140:2 – “continually gather together for war” – Lit. “who gather wars.” No doubt this means that they stirred up general enmity by their false information which acted as a trumpet sounding to battle.

140:3 – “sharpen their tongues” – Tongues can cut.

140:5 – “traps” – David desires to avoid the traps.

- If a godly man can be cajoled, or bribed, or cowed, or made angry, the wicked will make the attempt. Ready are they to twist his words, misread his intentions, and misdirect his efforts; ready to fawn and lie, and make themselves mean to the last degree so that they may accomplish their abominable purpose.

140:6 – “said to the Lord” – David looks up to God through the pain.

- “You are my God” – David doesn’t own God, but God owns him.

140:7 – “God the Lord” – The Hebrew is “Yahweh, the Adonai.”

140:8 – “wicked scheme” – The wicked do scheme.

140:9 – “those who surround me” – David is going to give God some advice on what to do with those who are attacking him.

140:10 – “burning coals fall upon them” – David will let God bring vengeance. (Rom. 12:20)

140:12 – “the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted” – David rests on faith despite the enemies.

- It is God’s nature to look out for the afflicted and poor.

Chapter 141:

Psalm 141 – “A Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies Within.”

- It seems the wicked are siding with David in an effort to get David to be evil.

141:1 – “cry out to You” – Desperate times produce desperate prayers.

- If you are going to cry out, you might as well direct it to the Lord.
- “Give ear to my voice” – David is looking for a quick response to his prayer.

- 141:2 – “prayer be set before You as incense” – The alter of incense stood next to the veil just on the outside the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant. The incense itself was sacred, not to be duplicated, and devoted to the service in the presence of God.
- David loved the tabernacle precincts. The tabernacle was a pattern of the heavenly reality.
 - “Bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” (Rev. 5:8)
- 141:3 – “Set a guard” – A man would never use this language without a conviction that he is in danger of transgression. David was conscious of a liability to err. A danger arises from the depravity of our nature. (Jer. 17:9)
- “watch over the door of my lips” – We more often regret the things we say than we should, than not having said the things we should. (Prov. 10:19; James 1:19)
 - The tongue is the principal instrument in the cause of God and it is the chief engine of the devil.
 - “The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.” (James 3:6)
- 141:4 – “incline my heart” – The heart always makes a convert of the mind. (Prov. 4:23; Matt. 12:34)
- “my heart” – It is a vain heart, a barren heart, and a sinful heart until you give it to God, and then it is the spouse of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and the image of God, so changed, and formed, and refined, that God calls it “a new heart.”
 - “practice wicked works” – Action results from the inclinations of the heart. (Matt. 15:19)
- 141:5 – “the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness” – He is submitting himself to the correction of the righteous.
- It is one of the most dangerous diseases of professors and one of the greatest scandals of this age that persons taken for eminently religious are more impatient of plain, though just, reproof.
 - If David could say of his enemy that cursed him, “Let him alone, for God has bidden him to curse;” much more safely may you say of your friend that reproves you, “Let him alone, for God has bidden him to smite.”
 - “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” (Prov. 27:6)
 - “kindness” – (Heb. “hesed”) Lit. “loving-kindness.”
 - “excellent oil” – Some persons pride themselves on being blunt, or, as they call it, “honest.” But very blunt people do little good to others and get little love to themselves. The Scriptures recommend gentleness and kindness.
 - Righteousness through the Scriptures is always a result of grace, and the gracious are the best to receive rebukes from.
- 141:6 – “Their judges are overthrown” – The leaders of a rebellion are often susceptible to rebellion, as they have surrounded themselves with rebellious people.
- There are no shortcuts to God’s promises. We cannot get what God wants to give by evil or selfish means.
- 141:7 – “the mouth of the grave” – David’s case seemed hopeless.
- 141:8 – “my eyes are upon You” – David remains anchored to God.
- 141:9 – “Keep me from the snares” – He seems more in trouble about covert temptation than concerning open attacks. Brave men do not dread battle, but they hate secret plots.

141:10 – “wicked fall into their own nets” – Like Haman, hung on his own gallows.

Chapter 142:

Psalm 142 – “Contemplation” – (Heb. “Maschil”) Lit. “instruction.”

- “the cave” – Possibly Adullam. (1 Sam. 22)
 - This is a picture of a young David, shepherd-boy turned giant-killer, now running from King Saul.

142:2 – “complaint” – David is completely honest with God, even in the ugly times.

- When we complain, it should not be before men, but before God alone.

142:3 – “You knew my path” – Even as David runs from King Saul, he recognizes God’s involvement in his heart and life.

- The Lord is not withdrawn to a great distance, but His eye is upon you. He sees you not with the indifference of a mere spectator, but He observes with attention. He knows, He considers your path; yes actually, He appoints it, and every circumstance about it is under His direction.

142:4 – “look on my right hand” – David turns from looking within, to looking around.

- “No one cares” – Help doesn’t come on the human level.

142:5 – “cried out to You” – Anything which leads us to cry unto God is a blessing to us.

- “You are my refuge” – David looks to God and finds his solace there.
- “My portion in the land of the living” – Not just in heaven, but also here and now. (Ps. 27:13)
 - It is sometimes easier to believe in a portion in heaven than in a portion upon earth.

142:7 – “my soul out of prison” – He is incarcerated by despair.

- “You shall deal bountifully with me” – David is confident in God for his future.

Chapter 143:

Psalm 143 – “A Psalm of the Deliverance of God’s Servant.”

- Why it has been set down as one of the seven penitential psalms, we can hardly tell; for it is rather a vindication of his own integrity, and an indignant prayer against his slanderers than a confession of fault.

143:1 – “Your faithfulness” – David is asking based on God’s goodness, not his own.

143:2 – “not enter into judgment” – David is looking for mercy, not justice.

- No sinner can endure the sight of God, if he tries to be self-justified.
- “Your servant” – Also in v. 12.

143:4 – “my spirit is overwhelmed within me” – In the accumulation of struggles, we can be overwhelmed.

143:5 – “remember...meditate...muse” – Three answers to being overwhelmed.

- “remember” – Jesus’ answer to return to our first love, “Remember therefore from where you have fallen.” (Rev. 2:5)

143:6 – “spread out my hands” – As a poor beggar for an alms.

- “like a thirsty land” – Hungry and thirsty for the Lord.
 - “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6)
 - David was a man after God’s own heart. (1 Sam. 13:14)

143:8 – “Cause me” – David recognizes the need for God’s initiation. If God does cause it, we won’t be able to do it.

143:9 – “In You I take shelter” – And this isn’t only as a last resort.

143:10 – “Teach me” – This is David’s heart and desire, even in the midst of great trial.

- “to do Your will” – David doesn’t say, “Teach me to know Your will,” but “to do Your will.”
- “Lead me” – He can pray this confidently, because he knows that God is good.

143:11 – “Revive me” – He is looking for supernatural life.

- “For Your righteousness’ sake” – He desires the end to be God’s glory.

143:12 – “cut off my enemies” – David desires God to slay his enemies as an act of His mercy.

- “I am Your servant” – David commits his life to God’s leading and protection.
 - “So likewise you, when you have done all things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’” (Luke 17:10)

Chapter 144:

Psalm 144 – Theme: “The Blessing of God Who Condescends.”

144:1-2 – There are 9 characteristics of God listed in these 2 verses.

144:1 – “trains my hands for war” – By bringing enemies against him to fight.

- Warfare is fought spiritually by running to the Lord first (v. 2), not by learning all the lessons to win every war on our own.
- A clergyman may be supposed to be taught of God, but people do not allow this to be true of weavers and workers in brass; yet these callings are specially mentioned in the Bible as having been taught to holy women and earnest men when the tabernacle was set up at the first. All wisdom and skill are from the Lord, and for them He deserves to be gratefully extolled.

144:2 – “My shield” – The Hebrew word signifies, not the huge shield which was carried by an armor-bearer, but the handy target with which heroes entered into hand-to-hand conflict.

- “Who subdues my people under me” – Leaders in the Christian church cannot maintain their position except as the Lord preserves to them the mighty influence which ensures obedience and evokes enthusiastic loyalty.
 - God is the One who sets up men in authority. (Dan. 4:17; Rom. 13:1)
- “my people” – David is likely the king of Israel at the time of this writing.

144:3 – “son of man” – (Heb. “enosh”) Lit. “mortal, frail.”

- “mindful of him” – God’s condescending grace to humanity. (Psalm 8:4)
- “mindful” – This word comes from the Hebrew root word which means “to weave or braid.” This is referring to God’s interconnected involvement with our lives.

144:4 – “Man is like a breath” – Life is so fleeting. (James 4:14)

- “Man” – (Heb. “adam”) This is referring to God’s created man which came from the dust.
- “breath” – The Hebrew word is translated “vanity” in Ecclesiastes.
 - The Hebrew word for “breath” is related to the name “Abel.”

144:5 – “and come down” – This is necessary for frail man, made from the dust, to have a relationship with God.

- This was never so remarkably fulfilled as in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, when heaven and earth were, as it were, brought together. But this will be more remarkably fulfilled still by Christ’s second coming, when He will indeed bring all of the inhabitants of heaven down with Him.

144:7 – “foreigners” – Those unbelievers attacking God’s people and promised land.

144:8, 11 – “falsehood” – They cannot be trusted.

- David is asking deliverance from the things of this world that the unbelievers trust in.

144:10 – “deadly sword” – The Targum make mention of this sword as the sword of Goliath.

144:12-13 – “sons...barns may be full” – David places children before stuff. He knows there is no value in wealth if our children aren’t committed to walking with the Lord.

144:12 – “our...” – David is praying for his people.

- “sons...daughters” – He is asking that God keep the children of Israel from the hypocrisy and duplicity of calling on God and yet trusting in the things of the world.
- “plants” – Saplings.
- “sculptured” – Finely crafted, shaped, and polished.

144:14 – “going out” – That is, going out to war.

Chapter 145:

Psalm 145 – This is the only psalm called “A Praise of David.”

- This psalm is an acrostic.

145:1 – “I will” – David is making a commitment to praise God.

- David will praise God even when fleeing on the mountains and hiding in caves, even when he doesn’t feel like it.

145:2 – “Every day” – Then God is to be blessed and praised in dark as well as bright days.

145:3 – “greatly to be praised” – God is worthy of all our praise.

145:4 – “One generation shall praise Your works to another” – This is how the Church survives and the Gospel is passed to the next generation. (Deut. 6:20-25)

145:7 – “Your righteousness” – It is easy to perceive God’s righteousness declared in the punishment of sins; the cross alone declares His righteousness of the remission of sins. It magnifies justice in the way of pardoning sins, and mercy in the way of punishing it.

145:8 – “The Lord is gracious” – This is God’s name spoken to Moses in Exod. 34:6.

145:9 – “good to all” – Even the worst taste of God’s mercy.

145:10 – “Your works shall praise You” – Creation groans awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God. (Rom. 8:19)

- Observe, neither the flower, nor the sea, nor the bird, praises with intent to praise. To them it is no exercise of intellect, for they do not know God and cannot understand His worthiness; nor do they even know that they are praising Him. They exhibit His skill and His goodness, and so forth, and in so doing they do much.
- “The hawk is beautiful because it acts like a hawk” – Woody Wolfe.
- “Your saints shall bless You” – It will happen.
- “saints” – This refers to all believers.

145:11 – “of Your kingdom” – This is the greater kingdom still to come.

145:14 – “all who fall” – And all fall.

- God doesn’t beat around those who fall, He “upholds” them.
- “bowed down” – The idea is “with burden or weight.”

145:16 – “open Your hand” – The things we most desire come from His hand.

- “satisfy the desire of every living thing” – Only God satisfies all desires.

145:17 – “Lord is righteous in all His ways” – Satan is constantly challenging the righteousness of God.

145:18 – “Lord is near to all who call upon Him” – No matter what they are going through.

- “in truth” – Sincerity.

145:20 – “Lord preserves” – Because we couldn’t do it ourselves.

Psalms 146-150 are “Hallel Psalms,” each psalm beginning and ending with “praise the Lord.”

- Some scholars believe these last five psalms serve as an epilogue to the entire book of Psalms.

Chapter 146:

Psalm 146 –

146:1 – “O my soul” – The psalmist is talking to himself again.

146:3 – “not put your trust in princes” – “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord.” (Jer. 17:5-8)

- “Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men.” (John 2:24)
- “a son of man” – Speaking of human beings.
- “help” – The idea is “deliverance.”

146:4 – “His spirit departs” – He dies.

146:5 – “Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help” – Especially in the day of his death. (v. 4)
- “Jacob” – The conniving and deceitful thief.

146:6 – “Who made heaven and earth” – God as Creator is a theme of the Hallel Psalms.

146:7-8 – The name Jehovah is repeated here five times in five lines to intimate that it is an Almighty power, that of Jehovah, that is engaged and exerted for the relief of the oppressed; and that it is as much to the glory of God to succor them in misery as it is to ride on the heavens by His name Jah (Ps. 68:4).

146:7 – “the oppressed” – God’s great power is directed to care for the downcast; the oppressed, hungry, prisoner, blind, burdened, strangers, fatherless, and widows.
- The miracles of Jesus fulfill the promises of Scripture.
- “gives food to the hungry” – We learn from this that He is not always so indulgent to His own as to load them with abundance, but occasionally withdraws His blessing that He may succor them when reduced to hunger.

146:8 – “loves the righteous” – Present tense. God is in the process of loving.

Chapter 147:

Psalm 147 –

- Greatness occupied with little things makes up the chief feature of this psalm.

147:1 – “it is pleasant” – It is a blessing to enjoy good things.
- How pleasant something is to us is often no testimony of its goodness.

147:2 – “He gathers” – God is intimately involved in our lives.
- “the outcasts” – It is God’s nature to after outcasts.
- In the Parable of the Marriage Supper, God sent a servant to collect those in the highways. (Matt. 22:1-14)

147:3 – “brokenhearted...wounds” – The most painful wounds are the wounds of the heart.
- The prophet Isaiah introduces His advent in the most sublime language: Jesus was sent “to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.” (Isa. 61:1)
- “heals...binds” – God heals the outcasts and brokenhearted with His almighty power.
- It is not a thing of the past of which He is now weary, for He is still healing and still binding, as the original has it.

147:4 – “the stars” – Scientists estimate there are 10^{25} stars.
- God has “set Your glory above the heavens” and yet “out of the mouths of babes and nursing infants” He receives praise. (Ps. 8:1-2)

147:8 – “the rain” – 1.5 trillion tons of rain falls to the earth each day in the hydro-system.

147:10 – “the strength of the horse” – God’s power makes the strength of the horse insignificant.
- God is not “worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” (Acts 17:25)

- 147:11 – “pleasure in those who fear Him” – God values spiritual strength more than mere physical strength.
- God is more honored by our humility than by our strength.
 - As a father takes pleasure in his own children, so does the Lord solace Himself in His own beloved ones, whose marks of new birth are fear and hope.
- 147:13 – “strengthened the bars of your gates” – God determined whether Jerusalem was saved or fell to the enemies.
- 147:15 – “His word runs very swiftly” – Like water flooding the land.
- 147:20 – “not deal thus with any nation” – The privilege of having God’s word!
- “What great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law?” (Deut. 4:8)
 - “What advantage then has the Jew?...Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.” (Rom. 3:1-2)

Chapter 148:

Psalm 148 –

- This psalm is neither more nor less than a glorious prophecy of that coming day when not only shall the knowledge of the Lord be spread over the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, but from every created object in heaven and in earth.
- 148:1-6 – Praising God from the heavens.
- 148:2 – “His hosts” – God has His rank and file of angels.
- 148:5 – “commanded” – God created them by His word.
- “created” – (Heb. “bara”) Lit. “to create out of nothing.”
- 148:7-12 – Praising God from the earth.
- All of creation will praise God together. (Rom. 8:21-22; Isa. 55:12-13)
- 148:7 – “great sea creatures” – This is not the Hebrew word for Leviathan, but likely refers to whales.
- 148:14 – “exalted the horn of His people” – God lifts up the strength and authority of His people.
- “near to Him” – We are near and dear to our God.

Chapter 149:

Psalm 149 – This is a “New Psalm,” evidently intended for the new creation for the men who are of a new heart.

- 149:1 – “a new song” – A song that accurately reflects what God is currently doing in our lives.
- 149:2 – “be joyful in their King” – This seems to be looking to the Kingdom Age and the Messiah’s reign.
- 149:3 – “praise His name with the dance” – There is a right way to do that.

149:4 – “the Lord takes pleasure in His people” – The Lord takes pleasure in His people, because they are His people; those whom He has purchased by His blood, renewed by His Spirit, and redeemed by His power.

- “beautify the humble with salvation” – Carry forward your thoughts to the morning of the resurrection, when this corruption shall have put on incorruption, this mortal immortality; when the body, raised in honor and glory, shall be clothed in its beautiful apparel and, being made like unto Christ’s glorious body, shall shine as the sun in the firmament.

149:5 – “saints be joyful in glory” – The saints are in glory, only to return with Jesus at Armageddon.

149:6 – “two-edged sword” – “The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Heb. 4:12)

149:9 – “all His saints” – Rev. 19:14 has the saints following Jesus to earth at the Battle of Armageddon as Christ sets up His kingdom on earth.

- “all” – That includes us.

Chapter 150:

Psalm 150 – The last psalm ends with a chorus to the praise of God, in which the psalmist calls on all people, all instruments of sacred music, all elements and all the stars to join.

- This psalm was perhaps written on purpose to be the conclusion of those sacred songs, to show what is the design of them all, and that is, to assist us in praising God.

150:1 – “mighty firmament” – Lit. “stretching out of His power.”

- “in His sanctuary” – When gathered together as believers.

150:2 – “His excellent greatness” – The King of Kings became the Lamb of God.

150:3-5 – All these instruments were invented by heathen cultures. (Philip Brooks)

150:3 – “trumpet” – Not the shofar, this is more likely like a cornet.

150:4 – “stringed instruments” – Lit. “strings.”

150:5 – “loud cymbals” – God isn’t hard of hearing, but He isn’t up tight either.

150:6 – “everything that has breath praise the Lord” – This is us. Let’s do it!!

- Imagine 3,000-4,000 Levites praising God together. Imagine the vast multitudes of humans and angelic beings praising God together in heaven.
- We praise Him with the very breath He has given us from His hands. (Dan. 5:23)
- “Praise the Lord!” – “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” (Heb. 13:15)